Transitions to Adulthood in Europe

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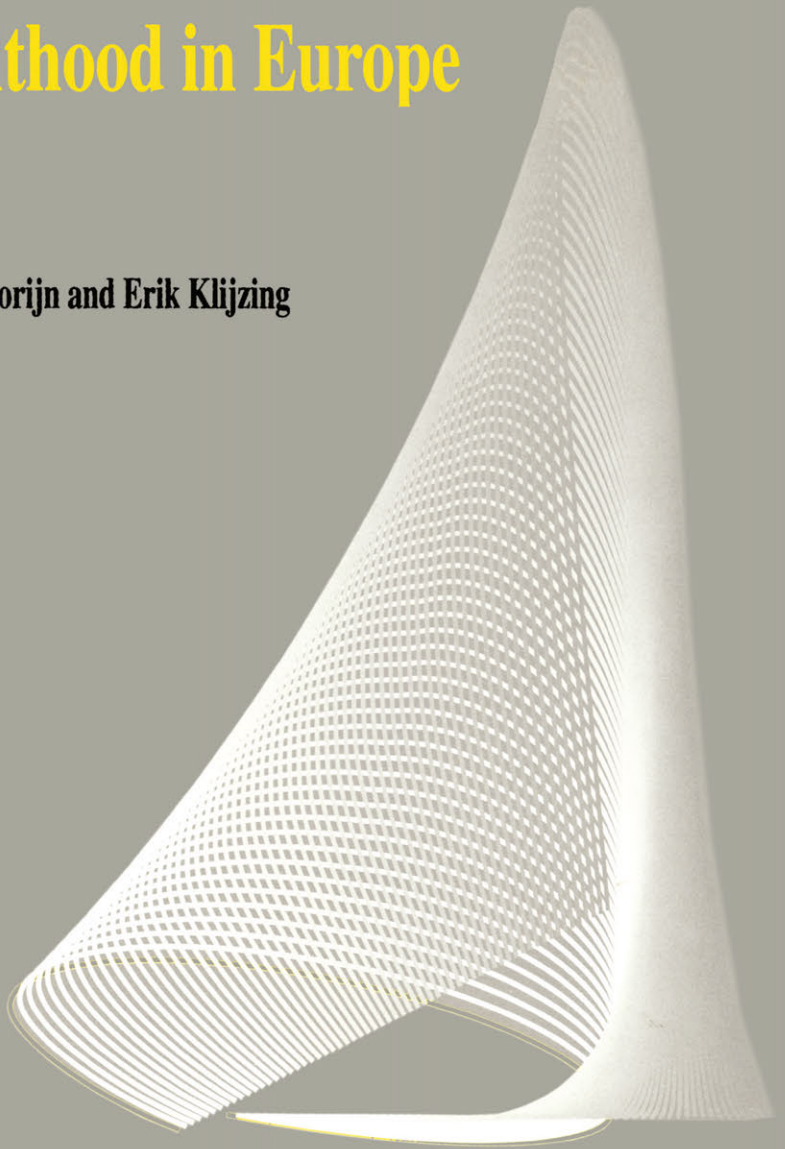## Martine Corijn and Erik Klijzing

Transitions to Adulthood in Europe

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Transitions to Adulthood in Europe

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PREFACE

The diversification in family practices constitutes a major theme of research in the field of population studies. A substantial part of these diversification processes are linked to the stage of family formation. The increase in non-marital cohabitation and non-marital fertility and the postponement of marriage and parenthood have particularly characterised the transition from youth to adulthood among the post-war cohorts.

In studying the transition from youth to adulthood, the timing of events is crucial. Different timing patterns are the product of the interplay between a multitude of factors in the institutional as well as the personal context. In this respect, cross-country comparative research is a powerful tool to understand the determinants of the change processes. To move beyond the mere description of the changes is a challenge that not only is eminently scientific, it also gives the necessary insights to grasp the implications of the changes for policy. From this policy perspective, the postponement of the integration into adulthood has major societal consequences, such as the very low fertility and the fact that the family formation itself became a matter of choice.

Over the years, the Population and Family Studies Centre (CBGS), a scientific institute of the Flemish Community, has intensively investigated these changes constituting the Second Demographic Transition, not only through national but through cross-national comparative research.

This research resulted among others in the ESPO-volume *'Diversity in family formation. The second demographic transition in Belgium and the Netherlands'* (de Beer and Deven, eds., 2000). Scholars from CBGS and Statistics Netherlands have investigated the amount of similarities and divergencies in the constituting processes of the Second Demographic Transition in the two neighbouring countries, which have quite comparable economic and cultural conditions.

In 1998, as part of the work programme of the CBGS section on Family Formation, Martine Corijn expanded her research on the transition to

adulthood in Flanders into a broader international comparative perspective. She convened an international workshop on *'Transitions to adulthood in Europe'* in Brussels (17-18 March 1998). The present volume is largely based on its outcome. Its general approach is that comparative research on the transition to adulthood requires an in-depth knowledge of the economic, institutional and cultural context in which this transition takes place. Therefore, scholars from ten European countries were invited to describe and analyse the transition to adulthood in their country following a similar template. The experts came from Austria, Britain, Flanders, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Spain. In addition, it was felt that the socio-demographic perspective on the transition to adulthood ought to be complemented with a developmental psychological perspective.

Changes in the patterns and the timing of the onset of steady relationships and living arrangements are relevant for policy makers as they impact among others on reproductive behaviour, career development and housing requirements.

The research presented in this volume is rooted in the context of the comparative research programme of the Fertility and Family Survey Project (FFS), *'Transitions to adulthood in Europe: from a matter of standard to a matter of choice'* (project no 22). For eight out of the ten countries, analyses are indeed based on FFS data, the collection of which during the 1990s was co-ordinated by the Population Activities Unit (PAU) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in Geneva.

Erik Klijzing - at that time project manager of the FFS project - joined this initiative as co-editor of this volume. In autumn 1999, Martine Corijn was seconded by CBGS to become the FFS project manager at the PAU in Geneva, whereas Erik Klijzing joined the Globalife project at the University of Bielefeld.

Also on behalf of the editors of this volume I acknowledge the support received from the CBGS secretariat, headed by Mrs. Anita Wouters, in providing the logistic support for the CBGS workshop referred to above and in assisting with the preparation of the various versions of this volume.

1. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD: SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

MARTINE CORIJN

1.1 | Introduction

The important changes in family and fertility behaviour in Western coun-
tries since the 1960s are nowadays generally framed as the Second Demo-
graphic Transition (Lesthaeghe and van de Kaa, 1986). Van de Kaa (1994)
identified three major shifts: changes in the timing, type, frequency and sta-
bility of unions; changes in contraceptive behaviour; and, changes in the
level and pattern of fertility. The postponement of marriage and parenthood
and the increasing prevalence of non-marital cohabitation and non-marital
fertility were but some of these major changes that affected very strongly
the transition from youth to adulthood among the post-war cohorts.

At a descriptive level, an important observation is that for a long time life
course segments were subject to chronologisation or age standardisation
(Kohli, 1985). This led to a normative model, with uniform and 'appropri-
ate' ages for parts of the life course, in particular for the transition to adult-
hood. Among pre-war cohorts, for instance, the transition to adulthood was
compressed into a relatively short period of time during which a series of
analytically separate events (completing formal education, entering the la-
bour force, leaving the parental home, establishing a nuclear household and
having a first child) occurred nearly simultaneously. Among post-war co-
horts this standardisation broke down, the time period within which these
events occurred broadened, the events themselves became less strictly de-

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fined and their sequencing more diverse (Buchman, 1989). Hence a shift took place from a standard biography to a choice biography or, more in particular, from a standard transition to a choice transition from youth to adulthood (Liefbroer and de Jong Gierveld, 1995).

The transition to adulthood became therewith increasingly dynamic and complex, and as such more and more recognised as a period worthy of closer study (Graber & Brooks-Gun, 1996; Hogan, 1981; Hogan and Astone, 1986; Irwin, 1995; Marini, 1978, 1985; Modell, 1989; Rossi, 1997; Sherrod, 1996). In the literature, one can find three perspectives on this transition.

A first perspective considers the transition to adulthood mainly in terms of the start of multiple careers, and in particular as the start of dual career investments: those of the family and work (Buchmann, 1989). As such the transition to adulthood involves changing access to various life spheres, shedding old roles, taking on new ones, and making (sometimes extensive) adjustments in biographical trajectories (Modell, 1989). Adulthood is the stage in life at which the problem of integrating and balancing the requirements of the occupational world with those of family life must be confronted. It is the embarkment on the complex set of role transitions that are involved in the twin agendas of work and family (Goldscheider, 1997). The multidimensionality of the entry into adulthood results therewith in a highly intense period of status changes, at least compared with other phases in the life course (Rindfuss, 1991).

A second perspective focuses on the structural constraints on the life course. Mayer (1986) distinguished four societal mechanisms, which impose order and constraints on lives: institutional shifts, state interventions and regulations, cumulative contingencies and collective cohort conditions. Also Buchmann (1989) considers the transition to adulthood as a strategic point at which to investigate shifts in the social structuring and the individual ordering of the life course. She tries to understand how society organises the transition to adulthood and how people direct and give meaning to their own biographies.

A third common description of the transition 'from dependence to independence', 'coming into one's own' or 'coming of age' is more of a developmental psychological nature (Modell, 1989; Klijzing, 1995). Through a series of important role transitions, a dependent adolescent becomes a productive and reproductive adult who has exchanged his or her position of economic dependence and membership in the family of origin for economic

independence and for the formation of a family of procreation (Marini, 1985).

These three perspectives are very much interrelated as the start of both a family and work career involves shifts in (in)dependence dealing with economic/financial, residential and emotional issues. Moreover this start of multiple careers and the procession towards independence happen in a context of socio-economic and socio-cultural opportunities and constraints: (in)dependence concerns relative positions and the different kinds of (in)dependence are often interrelated. For instance, residential autonomy requires financial resources to purchase privacy and autonomy. Or, financial dependence on the parents can be exchanged for financial dependence on social welfare benefits. Adulthood may be loosing its family connotation as it becomes focused increasingly on much narrower economic considerations - the ability to support oneself (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1993). Independence can be shown symbolically by living away from the parents, even if frequent return trips are needed to refuel financially or emotionally before moving out again. Emotional dependence on the parental home can be exchanged for, or extended to, emotional dependence on a partner. Within the social sciences it has become fashionable to discuss the prolonged economic dependence of large proportions of youth in terms of a new life stage, post-adolescence (e.g., Buchmann, 1989). According to these authors, post-adolescence represents a new type of transition to adulthood. It is characterised by the discrepancy between the full psychological, social and political autonomy of young persons, on the one hand, and their simultaneous economic dependence, on the other.

As the changes mentioned above in the transition to adulthood among the post-war cohorts are very much part and parcel of the Second Demographic Transition, we can use this theoretical framework to describe and explain them. Van de Kaa (1987) as well as Lesthaeghe and Surkyn (1988) assumed the Second Demographic Transition to be one process common to all European countries, although with important variations between them. According to a strict interpretation of this process, differences in family and fertility behaviour between countries would be only temporary and related to differences in timing. But as Kuijsten (1999) noted, one of the central elements of the Second Demographic Transition is a process of pluralisation of living arrangements and of a declining institutionalisation of the life course. This would lead to an increase in within-country diversity, without this necessarily implying that inter-country differences disappear (de Beer et al., 2000).

A first aim of this volume, therefore, is to describe the similarities and differences in the timing and kind of transition to adulthood among post-war cohorts in several European countries, in order to see whether trends are converging or whether inter-country variations persist.

Having described these trends, we want to understand why those important changes in the transition to adulthood took place. Van de Kaa (1994) distinguished three broad types of factors that gave rise to the Second Demographic Transition, namely: changes in the economic and social structure of a society; cultural changes; and, technological innovations. We will explore how some of these factors affected the transition from youth to adulthood in Europe.

A second aim of this volume, therefore, is to bring together the results of individual-level studies from several European countries which analysed the impact of selected determinants on the transition to adulthood. The focus will be in particular on those factors that gave rise to the Second Demographic Transition. Comparing the results of these country-specific analyses will shed light on the various ways these determinants operate, and thus enhance our knowledge of them.

1.2 | Theoretical considerations and hypotheses

The transition from youth to adulthood was originally approached from an almost exclusively descriptive perspective. Over the last fifteen years this research has gradually become more explanatory (Sanders & Becker, 1994).

The notions of age, chronologisation and standardisation were crucial in this descriptive perspective. Age is an important social marker during the life course. It is not a status to which, in and of itself, particular rights and privileges are due but an important singular cue for a series of transitions that mark the exit from a prior status in, or relationship to, a particular social institution and the subsequent entry into a new status or relationship (Modell, 1989). Particularly for the cohorts born between the two World Wars there has been an important degree of chronologisation or standardisation of the life course, and more particularly of the transition to adulthood (Kohli, 1985). Not only was there a significant drop in the average age at marriage, but the spread in the marriage age also rapidly narrowed. One could speak of 'on-time' transitions: they were culturally determined, cushioned by socialisation and supported by institutional arrangements. Individuals moving too slowly or too quickly through a particular transition were often ad-

monished. School dropouts were stigmatised. Youth seeking to marry too young were told by the state to get their parents' permission, or were not allowed to marry even with their consent. The trend towards increasingly standardised passages to adulthood slowed down or even came to a halt in some countries since the late 1960s (Buchmann, 1989). What was once a standardised period involving various rapid role and status changes became increasingly an extended, diversified and highly individualised 'in-between' period.

As said before, in order to understand why these changes in the transition to adulthood happened one can make use of the decisive factors that van de Kaa (1994) distinguished to explain the constituting elements of the Second Demographic Transition. In his view these factors are: changes in the economic and social structure of a society; cultural changes; and, technological innovations. Liefbroer (1999) has elaborated on these factors. Among the changes in the economic and social structure, he put forward five major changes: the expansion of the educational system; the increase in the labour force participation of women; economic developments; the creation and subsequent revision of the welfare state; and, changes in the economic structure. These social-structural developments coincided in time with important cultural changes. Liefbroer (1999) identified three major cultural changes: the decrease in normative controls on behaviour, which enabled individuals to fulfil their own wishes and preferences to a greater extent; the increasing individualisation, which implied a larger freedom for individuals to decide for themselves on how to organise their own life; and, the re-emergence of feminism which resulted in a re-orientation of priorities, particularly among higher educated women. As far as technological innovations are concerned, two major components are: the introduction and widespread distribution of reliable contraceptives; and, the introduction and widespread dissemination of the mass media. Taken together, all these socio-economic, cultural and technological changes neither started at the same time nor developed with the same pace in all Western countries. Most empirical studies have focused on the impact of socio-economic structures and cultural factors. Fewer studies have analysed the influence of technological innovations.

Most of the first theoretical accounts on the effects of the above mentioned factors on behavioural changes were rather general. In the 1990s, a plea for more specificity in these theoretical accounts was made (Blossfeld, 1995; Liefbroer & Corijn, 1999; Manting, 1994). For example, concerning the start of the work and family careers it was pointed out that men and women are confronted with these dual investments in quite different ways (gender-

specificity). Furthermore, not all events in the family career are equally in-compatible with education or work (event-specificity). Examining cultural factors such as those emanating from the parental background, theoretical accounts and empirical tests showed that their impact also differed accord-ing to the age (age-specificity) and the cohort (cohort-specificity) under study (see Manting, 1994). For instance, factors such as the parental religion which are important for the timing of marriage at younger ages don't neces-sarily play the same role or have the same strength when it comes to mar-riages at older ages. And factors such as educational level that were main determinants for the trend-setting cohorts don't necessarily exercise the same influence when the behaviour in question becomes more common. Blossfeld et al. (1995) introduced the idea that the role of these determinants is related to the culture or family system. More broadly, they argue that the economic, social and cultural context affects the particular role of the indi-vidual determinants (context-specificity). Their state of the art review brings together enough empirical evidence to suggest that these different kinds of specificity must be taken into account in the study of the determinants of the transition to adulthood.

In a changing cultural context of decreasing normative controls and in-creasing individualisation, individual preferences started to overrule social norms and expectations. The individualisation of the life course among the post-war cohorts carried with it a growing differentiation in the timing of the transition to adulthood, i.e., a weakening of the *age-relatedness* of events. The following hypothesis can therefore be formulated:

Hypothesis 1a: It is expected that the age-relatedness of the transition to adulthood among post-war cohorts becomes increasingly weaker.

This weakening age-relatedness goes hand-in-hand with another form of destandardisation, i.e. the decoupling of (pairs of) events from each other and possibly even a reversal of their sequential order. A first example is the decoupling of leaving the parental home and getting married. The most standardised traditional transition was to leave the parental home at mar-riage in order to becoming soon parents. This transition was possible if some form of economic independence existed, particularly of the man. For the post-war cohorts marriage became less of an immediate motive to leave the parental home. Reasons for leaving the parental home became more di-versified: education, work, independence, freedom, non-marital cohabitation. The first departure from the parental home was as such no longer necessarily marriage-related. Furthermore, in some countries the postponement of first marriage went along with the introduction of new, less

traditional living arrangements. Non-family living (alone or in quarters) and unmarried cohabitation became more popular. A second example of decoupling is that between marriage and parenthood. In the standardised transition model, couples got children because they were married. In the decoupling process people get married because they want a child, or because there is one already (under way). Thus, it is the anticipation of a child that becomes more the immediate cause for marriage. This decoupling can lead to a (planned) decrease of the interval between marriage and parenthood, but also to a reversal of the marriage-parenthood sequence and, as such, to an increase in the number of non-marital births.

The process of destandardisation, however, is not without any bounds. Even within a standardised transition to adulthood there was still room for social differentiation. A destandardisation of the life course and more particularly a strongly weakened age-relatedness brings up the question whether we are heading for an age-irrelevant society. In this context Kuijsten (1995) raises the question how far tendencies of individualisation can continue without running the risk of becoming counter-productive to people's ultimate aims and values in life. Destandardisation in the sense of ever more diversification also begs the question whether there are perhaps at the same time also counter-balancing factors at work. Limits to the process of destandardisation can be of different kinds. Sherrod (1996) for instance wonders to what extent contemporary changes in the transition to adulthood - of increased duration and inter-individual variability - may conflict with the biosocial nature of the human organism and thus may entail long-term consequences for individual development as well as for society at large. Mayer and Tuma (1990) and Buchmann (1989) strongly stress the institutionalisation of the life course as a major restriction on destandardisation and individualisation. Formal education for instance is an institution that still generates a strong age-gradation among young adults. For young men, inscription in the armed forces is another example of this principle. The household and family formation process, on the other hand, appears less subject to institutionalisation. The following hypothesis can therefore be formulated:

Hypothesis 1b: It is expected that, given the institutionalisation of the education/work career, more age-relatedness will show up in this career than in the family/household career.

Thus, because of institutionalisation and the biosocial nature of human beings, it can be assumed that destandardisation and individualisation will have their limits. Even in a context of permanent education, young adults will stop at one point or another to enter the labour market. The same can be

said with respect to marriage and parenthood: they are postponed, but not forever. Therefore,

Hypothesis 1c: It is expected that the destandardisation process has its limits and will culminate at the age of 25 in a rather high proportion of adults with work experience, and at the age of 30 in a rather high proportion of ever-married and a low proportion of childless adults.

We anticipate that the freedom to choose the timing of the social transitions differs among countries due to contextual differences. A Catholic tradition will restrict people's freedom to marry too early or too late. In this tradition marriage is seen as a serious decision with life-long consequences and, as such, it takes time. However, it is also a highly valued decision, which can not be postponed too long. High unemployment among young adults is another contextual factor that in most instances will act as a barrier. Contextual differences between countries can also determine the degree of decoupling of events and the prevalence of reversed orders. Again, a Catholic tradition is likely to restrict opportunities for decoupling the departure from the parental home and first marriage, or for reversing the order of marriage and parenthood.

Hypothesis 1d: It is expected that the degree and kind of destandardisation in the transition to adulthood is country-specific: Catholic countries will show a lower degree of destandardisation.

The economy and social structure of Western societies have undergone various changes since the 1950s, and these have exerted a strong impact on the lives of young adults. But the impact of economic and social opportunities and constraints appears not always so straightforward, hence, some further specifications are needed.

A first major structural change has been the expansion of the educational system which forced youngsters to remain in school for a longer period of time. Although this process started more than a century ago in most Western countries, an impressive acceleration set in during the 1950s. A major type of restriction that young adults are nowadays facing when they enter into adulthood is the inter-relatedness between their different life course trajectories. Particularly *educational enrolment* is seen as competing with family life, because students' time, energy and money are restricted. As such, the prolongation of the educational enrolment implies in many instances the postponement of family formation. Historically however, the increasing educational expansion did not immediately result in a postponement of mar-

riage and parenthood. During the early years of educational expansion, there was initially a trend towards a decreasing marriage and parenthood age, which bottomed out around 1975. Postponement of these events only started thereafter.

In the conflict of interests between spending one's time and energy in the family or in school, most young adults who are enrolled in education will postpone partnership, marriage and childbearing until they have completed their education. Whether or not educational enrolment will also lead to a postponement of leaving the parental home is less obvious. Young adults who are enrolled in higher education may be obliged to leave the parental home because their educational institution is located far away. But they usually have limited means to establish a household of their own and continue to depend on their parents or the state for support.

Hypothesis 2a: It is expected that generally speaking, an enrolment in the educational system and the start of a family are incompatible. This will be particularly true for events related to union formation and parenthood.

To the extent that couples adhere to a gender-specific division of labour within the family, or to the extent that women feel more responsible for the household they form and the family they create, the incompatibility between educational enrolment and household or family formation may be stronger among women, as women enrolled in education have more to 'loose' than men by entering a union or having a baby.

Hypothesis 2b: It is expected that the negative effect of educational enrolment on family formation is stronger among women than among men.

To the extent that young adults have long-term educational plans and family plans, the conflict of interests between education and family can be assumed to loose some of its sharpness with age. Therefore,

Hypothesis 2c: It is expected that the negative effect of educational enrolment on family formation weakens with age.

The incompatibility between enrolment and family formation seems to be a general phenomenon, present in all European countries (Blossfeld, 1995). However, the incompatibility between enrolment and leaving the parental home is likely to be much more country-specific. Since the 1950s, many Western countries have created an extensive safety net of welfare payments, which have weakened the link between socio-economic circumstances and

decisions about household and family formation. But social welfare policies differ in the way they consider the state versus the parents as mostly responsible for young adults' strive for independence. If the former, their provision of scholarships, free transport, rental subsidies or other facilities will make it much easier for young adults to pursue autonomy during their educational enrolment. Therefore we formulate:

Hypothesis 2d: It is expected that the incompatibility of educational enrolment and leaving the parental home is weaker in countries with a supportive social welfare policy.

An increase in *educational attainment* of young adults is a consequence among other things of the expansion of the educational system. As the formation of a family of one's own is part of the transition to adulthood, the New Home Economics - in particular Becker's (1981) thesis - can be invoked. This thesis states that an increase in educational attainment and thus in the labour force participation of women reduces the popularity of marriage and parenthood for them. Becker's analysis of the demise of marriage and parenthood is, however, based on the existence of a gender-specific division of labour within the family. The New Home Economics uses two behavioural mechanisms to link educational attainment and family formation. These mechanisms have been termed the 'income effect' and the 'price effect' (Berk and Berk, 1983). The key assumption here is that family formation is a valuable, albeit costly, good. The income effect of educational attainment on the timing of family formation is believed to be positive: the higher the educational level, the higher the income and thus the greater the likelihood that one can afford the valuable good of household and family formation. The price effect, on the other hand, holds that family formation incurs opportunity costs, because people will have less time to spend on paid labour. Hence, a negative effect is postulated of educational attainment on the timing of family formation: the higher the educational level, the higher the income and thus the more one has to forego by raising a family. The cornerstone in all of this is the alleged incompatibility of labour force participation and family formation for women. A negative impact of the educational level on family formation can only be expected if the combination of these two roles is problematic.

Highly educated young adults are likely to postpone the entry into household and family roles that entail high opportunity costs. However, educational attainment does not necessarily always lead to a postponement of all adult roles. Also, not all events in the household and family formation process are to the same degree incompatible with (female) labour force partici-

pation. Aspiring a high level of education can lead to an earlier departure from the parental home for youngsters who have to complete their education in another city or whose potential labour market lies elsewhere.

Hypothesis 3a: It is expected that the effect of high educational attainment on union formation, marriage and parenthood will be negative, but positive on leaving the parental home.

In the context of the gender division of labour within the family, the opportunity costs of marriage and childbearing are usually much higher for women than for men. Thus, the income effect is expected to dominate the relationship between educational attainment and family formation among men, whereas the price effect is expected to dominate this relationship among women. As main providers of the family income, men with higher earning potentials are better equipped to support a family and therefore more attractive as potential marriage partners, resulting in a positive effect of educational attainment on the timing of family formation. For women, on the other hand, their disproportionate share in household activities and the care of children makes the combination of family roles and occupational activities much more problematic. For them, therefore, the relationship between educational attainment and family formation is more based on the price effect mechanism. Higher educated women give up more income than lower educated women if they become housewives and mothers, because household chores and childcare are time-consuming activities that would limit their amount of time available for paid labour. The more traditional the gender division of labour among partners, the more this incompatibility for women will manifest itself.

Hypothesis 3b: It is expected that the effect of high educational attainment on union and family formation among women will be negative, but positive among men.

But opportunity costs vary with age. Early family formation may limit the time and energy to enter a career track and as such endanger the future occupational career. The opportunity costs of childbearing for highly educated young people may therefore be higher early in their career than somewhat later, whereas this age-relatedness may be less evident for young people with lower levels of education (Liefbroer and Corijn, 1999).

Hypothesis 3c: It is expected that the impact of the educational attainment one union and family formation will depend on the age-relatedness of opportunity costs, which diminish over time.

Blossfeld and colleagues (Blossfeld, 1995; Blossfeld et al., 1995) predict that the 'liberating effect' of women's educational attainment on their entry into marriage, motherhood and divorce will differ according to the family system prevailing in each country. In particular, they predict that this impact will be stronger in more 'conventional' or 'traditional' family systems. Liefbroer and Corijn (1999) believe that the impact of educational attainment and labour force participation on family formation will depend on the degree of incompatibility of labour force participation and family formation in the societies under consideration. This societal incompatibility can be discerned at a cultural and at a structural level. The former relates to broad ideologies, values and norms concerning the role of women in society; the latter to the actual opportunities for and constraints on the roles of women. The more gender equality is a dominant cultural value within society, and the better the structural opportunities for female labour force participation are, the weaker the impact of educational attainment and labour force participation on family formation will be. The empirical evidence for these theses is strong.

Hypothesis 3d: It is expected that the effect of the educational attainment on the rate of transition to adulthood will be stronger in countries with a more traditional family system and a less emancipatory labour market policy.

As mentioned before, a second important change in the economic and social structure that accompanied the Second Demographic Transition was the increase in the labour force participation of women. This increase was in most but not all countries related to the educational expansion and feminist ideologies. But since the 1970s young cohorts were particularly hard hit by high *unemployment* (EC, 1993), an issue that was of major importance for young men about the make the transition to adulthood. The lack of financial independence (income out of labour) created uncertainty for them with regard to assuming responsibilities as home-owner, partner and parent. The more (financial) responsibility is implied by these adult roles, the less likely it is that non-employed young adults (studying, unemployed, housekeeping) will take these steps.

Hypothesis 4a: It is expected that the negative effect of non-employment will be particularly strong on the marriage and parenthood rate.

Within a more traditional breadwinner culture, in financial terms men tend to be seen as the solely responsible person for all household members. Therefore,

Hypothesis 4b: It is expected that the negative effect of non-employment on the marriage and parenthood rate be stronger among men than among women.

Non-employment may imply no income at all or a reduced income from say, unemployment benefits. A reduced income may have a stronger impact on household and family formation perspectives at younger ages, as at that time less savings will already have been accumulated. On the other hand, at older ages a reduced income can be partly compensated by savings. Consequently,

Hypothesis 4c: It is expected that the negative effect of non-employment on the marriage and parenthood rate be stronger at younger ages.

Social welfare policies, if they exist, are intended to support those in financial precarious situations. The more generous a social welfare regime is, the less likely it is that young adults will feel hesitant about assuming responsible adult roles.

Hypothesis 4d: It is expected that the negative effect of non-employment on the marriage and parenthood rate be stronger in countries with a weak social welfare policy.

The cultural changes that van de Kaa (1994) refers to are multidimensional. A crucial cultural development is the increasing secularisation. In this context traditional household and family behaviours such as direct marriage and married parenthood were postponed in favour of less traditional behaviours such as unmarried cohabitation, living alone and unmarried parenthood. In the diffusion process of these less traditional household and family behaviours, in particular non-marital cohabitation, the role of the educational group and/or social class was not all that clear nor similar in different European countries (Corijn, 1994). However, the role played by the religious involvement of groups is better understood. Non-marital cohabitation, living alone, non-marital births started in non-Catholic, non-religious groups (de Feijter, 1991). This behaviour then diffused to non-practising religious groups and, in the end, sometimes also to practising religious people.

The effect of (various aspects of) *religion* on the ultimate marriage and parenthood intensities seems rather obvious, as marriage and married parenthood are still considered as traditional behaviours. Christianity has always attached a great deal of importance to family life. Sexual relationships were only considered legitimate within marriage, which was viewed as a life-long

bond; children were seen as the natural outcome of this bond. The effect of (various aspects of) religion on the timing of these events is less evident. Leaving the parental home, marriage and parenthood at too young or too old an age are not considered as traditional family behaviour. Non-religious people therefore are more free to plan the timing of their household and family decisions. Moreover, non-religious people can more easily disconnect household and family events from each other and even reverse their order. For instance, they can leave the parental home without marrying or form a first union without marriage and have children within it. When looking only at the timing of the events under study and not at the kind of event, therefore, predictions with regard to the impact of religion are harder to make.

Hypothesis 5a: It is expected that the effect of religion on the (ultimate) marriage and (married) parenthood rate is positive.

In general, as empirical evidence shows, women's behaviour seems to be more affected by religious values and beliefs than men's (Corijn, 1996; Goldscheider and Goldscheider, 1993; Moors, 1997). In line with this, we formulate

Hypothesis 5b: It is expected that the effect of religion on the (ultimate) marriage and (married) parenthood rate be stronger among women than among men.

Empirical evidence, from the beginning of the 1980s (Waite and Spitze, 1981), has also shown that the impact of characteristics of the parents on the marriage timing was strongest at the youngest and at the latest ages, and weakest in-between them. Marrying 'off time' (too early or too late) seems to be most subject to normative pressure from the parents. The religion in the parental home is perhaps a good example of this pressure. Michael and Tuma (1985), for instance, found that a Catholic religion at home slows down early marriage but stimulates the ultimate marriage intensity. Manting (1994), however, found that the effect of religion on the marriage rate (as first union) increases with age. Thus, the empirical evidence on how the impact of religion varies across age is inconclusive. Nonetheless, we favour the idea that the impact of the parental religion decreases with age, as we surmise that structural and individual factors overrule the impact of familial factors at later ages.

Hypothesis 5c: It is expected that the effect of the parental religion on the (ultimate) marriage and (married) parenthood rate decreases with age.

Analogous to Blossfeld's hypothesis on the context-specificity of the educational level, we assume the effect of religion to be context-specific. As countries differ in their degree of secularisation, in the importance of Catholicism and in their relative position within the diffusion process of less traditional behaviour, we anticipate a country-specific effect of the factor religion. In some countries, non-Catholics became forerunners with regard to modern family behaviour only in the 1990s. In others, most practising Catholics remained behind with regard to the adoption of novel household and family behaviour. For the timing of one's household and family career it thus makes a difference whether one is religious in a country where religion is the main tradition or in a country where it belongs to a minority (Wilcox & Jelen, 1993).

Hypothesis 5d: It is expected that the effect of religion on union and family formation will depend on the position of the country in the secularisation process: the more secularised the country, the less the impact of any religious involvement.

It is not always clear which aspect of religion accounts for an assumed traditional behaviour: religion as such, the kind of denomination or the strength of the religious commitment. Hypotheses on the influence of religion will be evaluated according to the availability of the data.

In this paragraph, we have formulated some general hypotheses on the determinants at the individual level of the transition to adulthood. The selection of determinants is in line with those often investigated in the literature. By further specifying the role of these determinants, and by bringing together the results of individual-level studies from different countries, we hope to deepen our understanding of the fundamental changes that young adults have experienced. As will be made clear in the next paragraph, the selection of determinants is partly dictated by the availability of data.

1.3 | Data and methods

The organisation and co-ordination of a round of Fertility and Family Surveys (FFS) in Europe and North America was part of the programme of work of the Population Activities Unit (PAU) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) for the 1990s. The aim of this project was to promote the collection and analysis of comparable survey data on fertility and the family in the ECE region. The FFS data were collected in 24

countries, with the very first survey carried out in Norway in 1988 and the very last in Greece in 1999.

In 1992 an FFS model questionnaire was made available to the participating countries (UN/ECE, 1992). This model increased the number of common variables, defined in a uniform way, across the country-specific surveys. However, countries had also to deal with their own survey traditions and specific objectives..

The FFS project was innovative in the sense that - with very few exceptions - data on both women and men were collected. In some countries, because of cultural restrictions, particular questions could not be addressed to men. In Poland, for example, birth history data were not collected from men, while in France questions on religion had to be omitted because of legal barriers.

In order to undertake a comparative study on the transition to adulthood in Europe, one of the editors of this volume - Ms. Martine Corijn, at that time working at Population and Family Study Centre (CBGS) in Brussels - decided to invite scientists from 10 different countries to provide country-specific contributions to a workshop organised for March 1998. The main advantage of this approach was that the participants were experts on the topic who knew the particular culture and institutions of their country best.

As is often the case in international comparative research projects, the final selection of participating countries depends on several factors, both planned and unplanned. A restriction of the envisaged study to FFS data alone could not be sustained, for various reasons: the United Kingdom never joined the FFS project; FFS data for Spain were not yet available; and, the FFS team from the Netherlands was unable to participate at the indicated time. However, as in these countries appropriate data and expertise from other surveys were available, it was decided to broaden the range of countries in stead of restricting them to those with FFS data only. The countries that were selected in the end cover rather well the different parts of Europe and give a diversified, although necessarily incomplete, picture of the different pathways to adulthood in Europe. The data cover parts of Northern Europe (Norway), Southern Europe (Spain, Italy), Eastern Europe (Poland), Central Europe (Austria, Germany), Western Europe (Belgium, the Netherlands, France) and non-continental Europe (Britain). These countries represent a wide array of social, economic and political systems.

The variation in the time schedule of the FFS countries participating in this study (from 1988 to 1996) as well as the variation in birth cohorts covered made us decide to choose for the most common cohorts, namely, those born in the 1950s and 1960s. Because of the differences in the time schedule of the surveys, however, not all of these cohorts can be followed up to exactly the same age in the various countries. An overview of the survey design characteristics involved in our comparative study can be found in Appendix 1. Only in Flanders (part of Belgium) was the sample restricted to respondents of Belgian nationality; in all other countries this restriction did not exist. Given the age range of the respondents under study, the selective impact of migration and mortality on the samples can assumed to be minor. A critical evaluation of the comparability of the FFS across countries and their sample design can be found in Festy and Prioux (forthcoming).

Difficulties are inherent in any comparative research endeavour. Certainly, one of the major goals of the FFS project was to promote comparative analysis. But even in the context of a well-prepared international project such as the FFS, problems are unavoidable as each country involved in it has some research tradition of its own to respect. Still, comparability in our study was maximised as much as possible. At the first workshop in Brussels in March 1998, instructions were given to use similar definitions of the dependent and independent variables. Also instructions for the methods to be used in the descriptive and analytic parts of each country study were given. Based on the discussions at the workshop, directives on the multivariate analyses were sharpened and hypotheses were adapted and/or refined.

The FFS were a good, although not perfect, data source for an international comparative study on the transition to adulthood. The main advantages of the surveys were that they had a common range of cohorts, a male and a female sample, and a core questionnaire. But the FFS was not devised to specifically study the transition to adulthood. For instance, the life history data gathering in the FFS was very much event-oriented. However, several aspects from the transition to adulthood over the last decades have lost their event character and became more of a process. In some country chapters, therefore, reference will be made to other survey data in order to reveal the process character of events such as leaving the parental home, entering the labour force, starting a first union, or becoming a parent.

As the prevalence of different pathways out of the parental home, of first unmarried cohabitation and unmarried parenthood varies across countries, the choice of dependent variables had sometimes to be adjusted accordingly. For instance, a very low prevalence of - say - non-marital cohabitation

makes its analysis statistically impossible and/or substantively irrelevant. At the descriptive level at least two events from the educational/occupational career will be dealt with: the end of educational enrolment and the start of a first job. A first step in the household and family formation process is the departure from the parental home. The changing role of marriage for the onset of co-residence with a partner implies that separate attention will be given to the timing of a first union. In some countries a distinction between leaving the parental home and first marriage, or between first union and first marriage, made little sense because the events coincide (almost) completely. If a departure from the parental home coincides with marriage, the timing of this departure is quite clear. But if this is not the case, it can be much more a process from the first to the final departure, with returns to the parental home in-between. In the chapters on France, Norway, Britain and Poland, for instance, frequent reference is being made to the process character of leaving the parental home. As marriage and parenthood are still (in the end) very common events in the family formation process, their timing is ana-lysed as well. In some countries these pairs of events coincide almost com-pletely, while in others they are more disconnected; this will deserve special attention.

For each country a description of the timing and the kind of transition to adulthood will be given. Around a core of similar events, country-specific variations will show up depending on available survey data and their topical relevance. In order to standardise the descriptive results two dummy tables describing the timing of the transition to adulthood according to a fixed lay-out were adopted at the start of the project. This timing will be summarised by quartile and inter-quartile measures (Table 1 in each country chapter), and graphically represented by inverted survival curves (at the end of each country chapter). The (dis)connection will be illustrated by tabulating the simultaneity and order of particular pairs of events (Table 2 in each country chapter).

On the explanatory level, the determinants of the timing of - in most cases - four events of the household and family formation process will be analysed (Table 3 in each country chapter). The determinants of the marriage and motherhood timing have already often been dealt with, also in the context of comparative research (Blossfeld, 1995). In our study we focus on a different set of countries and, in addition, pay attention to the role of religion. In some countries the determinants of pairs of events will be so similar - be-cause of simultaneity - that they don't deserve separate attention. If, for ex-ample, the first union is for most people their first marriage, then it is obvi-ous that those two events will be subject to the same pattern of factors.

In our study we focus on the role of education, employment and religion. In some countries appropriate measurements of these variables were, however, not always available, or they had to be treated differently. In particular data on the educational / occupational career were not always available in the same way for all countries. Moreover, the organisation of the educational system, of the labour force and thus of the transition from school to work differs markedly among countries (Shavit & Müller, 1998). The compulsory age for education, the progress and kind of educational expansion, possibilities for the combination and/or alternation of education and employment, and the generalisation and timing of military service have a profound impact on the kind of transition from school to work. In the chapter on the Netherlands, a distinction is made between full-time and part-time enrolment because of its meaningfulness in the Dutch context. The complexity of the alternation and/or combination of education and employment will be touched upon in the chapters on Norway, Germany and Austria. Another example of country-specific treatment is the education factor. For most countries a distinction could be made between the institutional and the human capital effect by controlling for the impact of enrolment and the educational level, respectively. For some countries the educational level was operationalised as time-varying, and the interaction with age was checked. Results on both the timing of first entry into the labour force and the impact of employment on the transition to adulthood must be situated in the context of country-specific labour market conditions. Unemployment and female labour force participation were at different levels and changed differently across the post-war cohorts in the various countries. In the chapter on France reference is being made to the difference between the start of a first job and that of a stable job. In the Flemish data a distinction could be made between the impact of full-time and part-time employment on the transition to adulthood. The Norwegian data show how seemingly similar quantitative data with regard to the employment history for the distinctive cohorts hide quite different qualitative aspects.

The countries under study also vary with regard to their ideological climate and degree of secularisation. Six countries are predominantly Catholic (Italy, Spain, Poland, Flanders, Austria, France), although they do differ strongly in terms of the frequency of church attendance. Two countries have mixed populations of both Catholics and Protestants (the Netherlands, Germany), whereas the two remaining ones (Norway, Britain) are mainly Protestant. The general ideological climate of a country determines to some extent the way in which information on the ideological characteristics of the respondents is gathered. In Flanders, for instance, the religion in the parental

home was considered to be the most appropriate indicator of the effect of religious background on the transition to adulthood, while in other countries religion was measured at age 23 (Britain) or at the time of the survey (Italy, Poland). The Dutch panel data allow a measurement of religion both before and at the event under study. Moreover, the proportional distribution of the respondents by religious groups co-determines the way in which this variable can be handled in the multivariate analyses. In Catholic countries various categories of religious commitment could be used, whereas in the Dutch case separate indicators for denomination and church attendance are available.

The country-specific analyses also vary in the range of control variables that have been or could be introduced. Here tradition and relevance are the most important criteria. Regional differences and the urban/rural distinction seem to be of relevance in Italy, Spain, Britain and Poland. The experience of a parental divorce seems of little relevance in a country as Italy where divorce was for a long time not allowed.

Technological innovations have strongly changed the lives of young adults. As data on mass media were not available, as is often the case in surveys of a more socio-demographic nature, the impact mass media on the transition to adulthood could unfortunately not be investigated. Data on contraception were selectively available at the individual level but were not used. Information on the trends in contraceptive use can be found in the series of FFS Standard Country Reports.

The determinants of the timing of the events in the transition to adulthood will be analysed by using a hazard model. Recent empirical studies point to the historical and personal time-specific role of some determinants (Manting, 1994; Liefbroer and Corijn, 1999). As the cohorts and the time period involved in this study are restricted, we can not focus on the historical specificity. As the age range of the transition to adulthood becomes longer, factors playing a role at an early age do not necessarily have to play the same role at a later age. Very early and very late transitions to adulthood can be subject to other determinants than "on time" transitions. The output of the analyses will provide for each event under study a basic model with all main effects of the central variables included, and a final model with all significant interactions of the central variables with age.

1.4 | Structure of this volume

The title of this volume 'Transitions to adulthood in Europe' is in some ways too general to cover its content. The transition to work and the kind of career start as an independent process will not get the attention they deserve. These topics are more often dealt with in the literature on social stratification and mobility. The occupational career will only be dealt with as a parallel, interrelated career of the family history. However, in research on the transition to adulthood, Oppenheimer et al. (1993) studied in detail the process of the start of the employment career among men, developed the notion of career (im)maturity and analysed how this is linked with the marriage timing.

Changes during the transition to adulthood are not confined to those in the household and family domain alone, but also occur in the public domains of education and work as well as in the psychological domain (Liefbroer, 1999). In a first step to a more interdisciplinary approach of the study of the transition to adulthood, Chapter 2 is therefore devoted to contributions from developmental psychology to the study of the transition to adulthood. The transition from youth or adolescence to adulthood is since Erikson (1968) at central stage in developmental psychology. The life course perspective became therewith part of this discipline. The psychological perspective focuses more on developments prior to adult transitions (Graber & Dubas, 1996), as well as on the consequences of early adolescent developments for later life (Sherrod, 1996). The dynamics in the parent-child relationship, such as the dimensions of autonomy and relatedness, separation and individuation, individuality and connectedness receive particular attention in this perspective (O'Connor et al., 1996). The 1996 edition of New Directions for Child Development was devoted to 'Leaving home: understanding the transition to adulthood' (Graber & Dubas, 1996). The 1997 edition of the Journal of Family Issues (Cherlin et al., 1997) was a special volume on 'Delayed Home Leaving' that paid special attention to the psychology of young adults. It would thus have been artificial to exclude a more psychological perspective from a book on the transition to adulthood in which notions as (in)dependence are so central. As we will see in the country-specific chapters, frequent mention is being made of the importance of psychological factors for the transition to adulthood.

Chapters 3 to 12 contain country-specific contributions with a common core on the timing and the determinants of the transition to adulthood. The expertise of the authors and the availability of data account for country-specific variations.

The last chapter contains a summary of the descriptive and analytic patterns found. The hypotheses on the country-specificity of the determinants of the transition to adulthood are discussed. Conclusions focus on the relevance of this project for future research.

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Appendix 1   Survey design characteristics

Country	Fieldwork			Sample characteristics in the FFS or other surveys			
	Survey	Start	End	Men	Women	Cohort Range	Age Range
Austria	FFS	Dec-95	May-96	1539	4581	1941-76	20-54
Britain	NCDS	Panel 1958-91		4682	5001	1958	
Flanders (Belgium)	FFS	Mar-91	Dec-92	2198	3236	1951-70	20-39
France	FFS	Jan-94	Apr-94	1944	2944	1944-73	20-49
Germany	FFS	Jul-92	Jul-92	3998	5976	1952-72	20-39
Italy	FFS	Nov-95	Jan-96	1206	4824	1945-75	20-49
Netherlands	PSIN	Panel 1987-95		962 in 1995		1961-69	
Norway	FFS	Oct-88	May-89	1543	4019	1945-68	20-43
Poland	FFS	Dec-91	Dec-91	3783	3902	1942-71	20-49
Spain	SDS	Sept-91	Dec-91	5064	5180	1950-65	26-41

2. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD: DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS

LUC GOOSSENS

2.1 | Introduction

The present chapter adopts a complementary perspective to the previous one by introducing psychological factors, both within the individual and in social interactions, as co-determinants of young people's entry into adulthood. The need for such a perspective has been recognised in the literature for quite some time now.

It has been maintained, for instance, that the sophisticated data-analytic studies on large, national data sets, which are so characteristic of sociological or demographic research on the transition to adulthood, should be complemented with social-psychological studies that analyse the meanings and interpretations that individuals assign to the transitions they are going through. One should further realise that information of household structure (i.e., whether young adults still reside with their parents or have already left home) can never substitute for knowledge of family processes (White, 1994).

However, the review presented in this chapter will be limited to psychological factors as they are examined within the discipline of developmental psychology by means of prospective, longitudinal research. The psychological determinants of home leaving discussed in this chapter will therefore be

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referred to as 'developmental factors'. All of these factors will date back to at least adolescence, that is, the life phase that immediately precedes young adulthood. Thus, the focus will <u>not</u> be on parent-child relationships in young adulthood (Thornton, Orbuch, & Axinn, 1995), but rather on family interactions in adolescence as they affect the transition to adulthood (Aquilino, 1997).

The chapter falls into four different parts. First, the role of psychological variables - as opposed to socio-cultural factors - in the transition to the full adult status will be discussed. Next, the two most important categories of psychological variables will be discussed, namely, family factors and individual factors. Finally, some general conclusions on the impact of these developmental factors will be derived from the findings reviewed in this chapter, and recommendations for future research on the transition to adulthood will be outlined.

2.2 | Role of psychological variables

In this introductory section, we will briefly sketch (i) why psychological variables are important in the transition to adulthood, (ii) how they relate to societal and cultural determinants of this same transition, and (iii) which factors may be subsumed under the broad heading of 'psychological' or 'developmental' factors.

The transition to adulthood is strongly influenced by the socio-historical and cultural context in which it takes place. For several decades now, important changes have been noted in the way in which young people make their entry into adulthood. The events that mark the transition to adulthood are taking place over a longer time span and, at the same time, there is increased inter-individual variability in the sequence and timing of these events (Hogan & Astone, 1986; Sherrod, Haggerty & Featherman, 1993). Within this broader historical framework, individual and familial factors have become more important than they used to be in earlier times (Sherrod, 1996).

The reasons for this important change are twofold. First, the role of biological factors as determinants of the transition to adulthood has diminished. In traditional societies, the achievement of physical and reproductive maturity simply coincided with the assumption of adult responsibilities. These co-ordinated transitions to the full adult status were further accompanied by 'rites de passage' that served an important regulatory function in the social realm. But now that reproduction in the human female is no longer regulated

by biological factors only, these social markers have all but disappeared from social life. A second reason, then, why individual developmental factors have gained in importance is that the social regulation and accompanying social support for making the transition to adulthood has become virtually absent in contemporary society.

Two important transition phases may therefore be distinguished for contemporary youth. The first, which takes place in early adolescence, centres on the establishment of psychosocial independence from parents. The second, which takes place about ten years later - that is, in early adulthood - has to do with the attainment of practical independence. One can then surmise that the successful negotiation of the first transition will predict the timing and relative ease of the second transition. A series of longitudinal (or follow-up) studies have examined the associations between various developmental factors as measured in early adolescence (or even before that stage) and the transitional processes of early adulthood. This chapter will be devoted, in large part, to a review of these studies.

It is further important to note that the developmental factors described in this chapter do not replace the societal or economic influences discussed in the other chapters of this volume, such as educational level, occupational career, religion, or social policy. Macro-structural influences such as economic changes, demographic factors, and political structures (see White, 1994 for a review) are important determinants of the transition to adulthood. Delayed home leaving among early adults, for instance, is related to the problems in finding suitable employment or proper housing for young people. Young adults therefore experience a need for higher levels of schooling and many parents encourage their children to stay in school for a longer time. This strategy does of course significantly reduce the risk of unemployment, but inevitably delays the transition to adulthood. Some parents also allow their children to live with them until they themselves can afford the luxury of proper accommodation (Cherlin, Scabini & Rossi, 1997). The role of all these factors is readily acknowledged in this chapter, but at the same time it is asserted that developmental factors exert an influence of their own, along with these socio-cultural determinants with which they may be found to interact.

What then is the nature of these complementary causes? The developmental factors discussed in this chapter fall into two categories. The first of these is labelled 'familial factors' and refers to various types of social support as received within the family. Under this broad heading, we will discuss the role of (a) the general quality of adolescents' relationships with their parents, and

(b) family processes (or family interaction) during adolescence. The second category of developmental factors will be designated 'individual factors'. This term refers to measurable differences in habitual behaviour as observed between individuals. These patterns of behaviour are relatively stable and emerge during adolescence or may be found to exist already from childhood onwards. This category therefore comprises (a) adolescent competence and (b) personality. The role of each of these four factors in the transition to adulthood will now be discussed in turn.

2.3 | Familial factors

The importance of family processes and family interaction as facilitators of the transition to adulthood in both normal (Bloom, 1987) and pathological development (Haley, 1997) has long been recognised in psychological theories and has been illustrated by numerous case studies. More systematic research of a longitudinal nature (Graber & Dubas, 1996) has confirmed that positive relations with one's parents and specific patterns of family interaction are associated with the timing and type of transitions to young adulthood, with the nature of subsequent interaction with parents, and with the sense of well-being in early adulthood.

Quality of relationships with parents. In one recent longitudinal study (Dubas & Petersen, 1996), the general quality of young people's relationships with their parents was assessed twice in adolescence (at ages 13 and 18, respectively) and related to the geographical distance they had moved away from their parents in early adulthood (at age 21). Parent-child relationships were measured by means of the Family Relationships sub-scale of the Offer Self-Image Questionnaire (OSIQ), adapted for use with young adolescents. The original instrument comprises such items as: "My parents usually are patient"; "Later on, we want to have a family similar to my own"; or, "Most of the time, my parents are satisfied with me" (Patton & Noller, 1994). With regard to geographical distance from parents, four groups of early adults were distinguished. These groups comprised: (a) early adults who still lived with their parents; (b) those who lived within an hour's drive from home (which allowed for frequent visits back and forth); (c) those who came to visit their parents during weekends only; and (d) those who lived in another part of the country (which made it difficult to visit their parents frequently).

Statistical analyses revealed that individuals who lived at home during early adulthood had at both age 13 and 18 reported family relationships that were

worse than those of young people who had moved farthest from home. The findings of this study, then, seem to suggest that children who are emotionally close to their parents can move some geographical distance away from them. Research on family interaction confirms and expands on these results.

Family interaction. In a representative longitudinal study (O'Connor, Allen, Bell & Hauser, 1996), the quality of family interaction was determined in early adolescence (ages 14 to 16) and again related to contact frequency and satisfaction with the relationship with parents in early adulthood (around age 25). The sophisticated measure of family support used in this study was based on observations of actual family interactions. The target adolescent, his or her mother and one sibling were invited to a psychological laboratory and asked to resolve up to three family dilemmas. (One of these assignments, e.g., could be to plan a family holiday). The entire discussion among the family members of about 30 minutes was videotaped and later coded by trained psychologists by means of an elaborate coding scheme (see Grotevant & Carlson, 1989, for an overview).

The particular scheme used in this study, the Autonomous Relatedness Coding System, comprises three dimensions. The first dimension, labelled Autonomous-Relatedness, measures the extent to which family members express and discuss the reasons behind disagreements, display confidence in stating their position, validate and agree with another family member's statements and attend to the other's statements. The second dimension of the coding system, typically referred to as Inhibiting Autonomy, has to do with boundary violations. Family members receive higher scores on this dimension if they frequently over-personalise a disagreement, recant a position without appearing to have been persuaded that theirs is wrong, or attempt to pressure another family member to disagree. Finally, the third dimension, Inhibiting Relatedness, refers to hostility in its various forms. These may comprise both direct expression of hostility towards another family member and various types of impolite behaviour (such as rudely interrupting or ignoring another family member).

The rationale behind this coding system (see Allen, Hauser, Bell & O'Connor, 1994, for a more elaborate description) is of course that autonomy (independence in thought, emotions, and actions) and relatedness (involvement with others) do not represent opposing attributes but should ideally be combined into a single relationship dynamic. Put differently, one should always strive for a balance between autonomy and relatedness, and avoid excessive autonomy or over-dependence on others. Historically speaking, the impetus for the development of this measurement strategy

may be found in the Individuality-Connectedness Model (Grotevant & Cooper, 1986). In this model, individuality (or autonomy) and connectedness (or relatedness) were coded as two separate dimensions. Several studies, however, indicated that in families where all family members managed to combine individuality and connectedness, adolescents were found to fare better in terms of role-taking (i.e., their ability to take another person's perspective) and exploration of identity alternatives. The Autonomy-Relatedness Model therefore represents the next logical step in the development of family interaction models, in that autonomy and relatedness are combined and measured as a single underlying variable.

The results of the longitudinal study of home leaving using this coding system revealed a negative association between autonomous-relatedness and the frequency of contact with parents. That is, young adults who had been assigned low scores on autonomous-relatedness in adolescence had very close contacts with their parents. Their age mates who had obtained middle to high scores on this dimension as adolescents were neither likely nor unlikely to be close with their parents. By contrast, young adults' satisfaction with their relationships with their parents proved unrelated to the quality of family interaction in early adolescence (as measured by means of the Autonomous Relatedness Coding System). These results, then, suggest that failure to establish autonomy and relatedness during adolescence correlates with frequent contact (but not necessarily with greater satisfaction) with one's parents during young adulthood.

The available data on family interaction and relationships with parents, then, lead to the conclusion that a secure attachment to one's parents in early adolescence allows the young adult to establish autonomy, to move some distance away from his or her parents and to maintain a moderate frequency of contact with them. A corollary to this conclusion is of course that staying close to home or maintaining a high degree of contact with one's parents is related to a prior insecure attachment or to poor relationships with one's parents in general (Sherrod, 1996).

It should be added here that poor and, more specifically, conflictual relationships with parents can also push young people outside of the family or force them into an early escape from home. Leaving home at a very early age (i.e., before one's eighteenth birthday) is clearly associated with poor family relationships. Support for this link may be found in several European studies that used a longitudinal design. One of these studies (Stattin & Magnusson, 1996) concentrated on Swedish women who left home early (i. e., before the age of 18). Compared to other adolescents of their age and gender

who left home later, the early leaving girls had a long history (since early childhood) of discordant family relationships (especially with their mother). From childhood onwards, they also evidenced behavioural problems that are described as 'externalising problems' in psychological parlance. These diffi-culties basically imply that these girls were more aggressive and impulsive than average children of their own age and gender. During adolescence, the early leaving girls displayed more adjustment problems. The latter difficul-ties comprised (a) lower educational achievement and aspirations, which caused these girls to drop out of school at an early age, (b) higher use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs, and (c) more intensive contacts with the opposite sex at an early age.

Another recent longitudinal study, which was conducted in different parts of Germany, confirmed this general picture of results (Silbereisen, Meschke & Schwarz, 1996). In former West Germany, boys and girls who left home earlier had parents who engaged less in monitoring activities. This means that they did not keep track of their children's whereabouts or did not ac-tively try to find out whom their sons or daughters tended to associate with during their spare time. Possibly as a result of this low level of parental monitoring, early leavers were more involved in peer activities and deviant behaviours in both parts of Germany.

No matter what the precise nature of the association may be, there are clear indications that a successful transition to adulthood is highly dependent on how the earlier developmental task - that is, the establishment of psychoso-cial independence - was handled and on the quality of family relationships in earlier phases of life. Family factors, therefore, are important determi-nants of young people's success at their entry into the adult world. Addi-tional findings on the role of a second category of developmental factors, referred to as individual factors, will be discussed in the next section.

2.4 | Individual factors

As indicated earlier, this section will describe the effects of two types of individual factors, namely, adolescent competence and personality. The dis-cussion of the role of individual competence in the transition to adulthood will concentrate on the concept of planful competence (Clausen, 1991a). The impact of personality will be illustrated mainly with findings from re-search on shyness (Caspi, Elder & Bem, 1988) and, to a lesser extent, from studies on ill-tempered children (sometimes referred to as "explosive" chil-dren; see Caspi, Elder & Bem, 1987). Throughout the discussion, the em-

phasis will be on the various mechanisms that may help explain the impact of individual factors in the transition to adulthood and, more broadly, in the stability of personality over time (see Caspi, 1998; Caspi & Bem, 1990, for an overview of these mechanisms).

The evidence bearing on the role of individual factors in the transition to adulthood is all based on a series of three long-term follow-up studies collectively referred to as the Berkeley Longitudinal Studies, or the Intergenerational Studies. The individual projects within this series are commonly called the (Berkeley) Guidance Study (GS), the Berkeley Growth Study (BGS), and the Oakland Growth Study (OGS), respectively. (The latter is also known as the Adolescent Growth Study). All three projects were initiated between 1928 and 1931 when the participants were infants (for the GS and BGS members) or school-age children (for the OGS members), and they are still ongoing. At the most recent follow-up assessment in 1982, the participants were between 54 and 62 years of age. The samples used in these three studies were collapsed into a single, somewhat larger sample for research on individual competence, whereas data from individual studies within the Berkeley series were used to analyse the impact of personality on the life course.

Adolescent competence. Planful competence may be defined as the ability to think through career choices so as to make more realistic choices in education, occupation and marriage, or - conversely - to refrain from unwise choices in these domains of life (Clausen, 1991a). The empirical research on this concept is inspired by a so-called life-stage hypothesis. This hypothesis implies that planful competence (a) emerges during mid-adolescence (i. e., somewhere between 15 and 18 years of age) and (b) has an influence on the transition to adulthood. In addition, it is assumed (c) that a person's level of planful competence is instrumental in predicting his or her subsequent life-course well into mid-life (and possibly even beyond that stage of life).

An adolescent's level of planful competence is derived from interviews, observations, inventories and tests. Clinical psychologists carefully read through all the material collected on a given individual (transcripts of interviews, observational reports and test scores) and then rate the individual on a number of scales which are later combined into broader constructs, such as planful competence.

The construct of planful competence comprises three components: (a) dependability, (b) intellectual investment, and (c) self-confidence. Dependability is measured by such items as: "is a genuinely dependable and respon-

sible person", "is productive, gets things done", and "tends towards over-control of needs and impulses". An adolescent's level of intellectual investment is probed by means of items such as "genuinely values intellectual and cognitive matters", "has a high degree of intellectual capacity", or "is introspective; self-observing; concerned with self as an object". Self-confidence, finally, is measured through items such as "feels satisfied with self", "is calm and relaxed in manner", and "is cheerful".

Planful competence, thus defined, is instrumental in shaping the life course, as indicated earlier. First and foremost, a person's planful competence in adolescence is associated with the timing of his or her transition to adulthood. Adolescents who score high on planful competence obtain more education and therefore make the transition to adulthood on average at a later age.

If the analysis is extended into mid-life, additional advantages of a planful approach to life's many problems come to the fore. People high on planful competence are found to have lower rates of divorce and remarriage. In the domain of work, men who are high on planful competence have more orderly careers and manage to achieve a higher occupational status. (Women in the cohorts examined in the Berkeley studies did not often work outside the home so that for them these occupational effects of planful competence could not be demonstrated.) Finally, both men and women who score high on planful competence experience life crises (such as unemployment or alienation of one's children) less often and show less personality change over the life course.

The latter finding may simply reflect the fact that people who have achieved psychological health (i.e., those high on planful competence) have less need to change the way in which they are dealing with the world. An alternative explanation is of course that people high on planful competence change careers and partners less often and therefore do not need to adapt their personality to new careers or new partners. However, a recent re-analysis of the data collected in the Berkeley Studies demonstrated that people's commitments in the areas of work and family predicted personality stability and change over and above the effect of planful competence. Controlling for planful competence, difficulties with work commitment (i.e., greater disorderliness of one's career) predicted personality change for men, while difficulties with family commitments (i.e., the number of divorces) predicted personality change in women (Clausen & Jones, 1998). In short, personality stability comes about as a result of both planful competence and people's active choices in life. This general notion of multiple influences on person-

ality is further supported by research on pre-adolescent personality as a determinant of subsequent development throughout the life course. In these studies, several mechanisms have been suggested that could account for continuity and change in personality.

Personality. The findings on pre-adolescent personality as a determinant of the transition to adulthood were all derived from the Berkeley Guidance Study. Collectively, the results suggest that childhood personality affects the timing and outcomes of later transitions. But the mechanisms advanced to account for these influences take on a somewhat different form for the various aspects of personality examined, that is, shyness or ill-temperedness.

In the Guidance Study, shyness was derived from individual interviews with the mothers of the Berkeley children when they were between 8 and 10 years old. Two components were distinguished within the construct, namely, shyness proper (also called 'social anxiety') and reserved behaviour (or social inhibition). Each of these components was rated on a 5-point scale by trained psychologists who based their judgement on their reading of transcripts of the individual interviews. Children's scores on the Shyness Proper scale ranged from a low of 1 defined as "exceptionally easy and quick social contacts, or enjoys meeting new people", over the neutral score of 3 defined as "easy contacts with certain types, but not with others" to a high of 5, which implied "acute discomfort to the point of panic in social situations". Similar behavioural anchors for each point on the scale were used for the Reserved Behaviour scale. Participants' scores on the two scales were averaged and those having a score above 3 on the combined scale (about 30 per cent of the sample) were designated as having a childhood history of shyness (Caspi et al., 1988).

Childhood shyness, thus defined, had a strong influence on men's but not on women's entry into the world of adulthood. Men with a history of childhood shyness made the transition to adulthood at a later age than their non-shy age mates. For instance, on average, they were older than other men in their cohort when they first married (25 versus 22 years), when they first became fathers (28 versus 24 years) and when they first entered stable careers (28 versus 25 years). This association may be explained in terms of *interactional* continuity. Shy children, it is surmised, have a very specific problem: any situation that implies a source of novelty evokes shyness and a lack of initiative in these individuals. The transition to adulthood, which brings many sources of novelty with it, therefore causes young adults predisposed to shyness to react with withdrawn or unassertive behaviour. These reactions in turn make shy individuals less interesting partners in social interac-

tions and therefore lead to further isolation and delayed entry into stable relationships. One reason for this could be, for instance, that men (particularly in the Berkeley cohorts) are supposed to take the initiative in heterosexual contacts.

Shyness in childhood further had a significant effect on men's occupational success in mid-life. There was no direct link between pre-adolescent personality and the occupational outcomes but an indirect one. Shyness predicted delayed entry into a stable career, which, in turn, predicted both lower occupational achievement and lower occupational stability. This pattern of findings suggests an alternative explanation in terms of *accumulative* continuity. Because of their delayed entry into stable careers, men with a history of childhood shyness may have missed important opportunities for occupational advancement (e.g., acquisition of specific skills in the early stages of one's career), which could otherwise have acted as a buffer against career instability.

The effects of ill-temperedness in childhood (or temper tantrums) on men's occupational success in mid-life were somewhat different from the impact of childhood shyness. Ill-temperedness was again measured by means of two 5-point scales on which trained psychologists rated the frequency and intensity of temper tantrums in childhood. The scores on the two scales were again averaged and children having a score of 3 or above on the combined scale (about 40 per cent of the boys and 30 per cent of the girls) were labelled as having demonstrated ill-temperedness in childhood (Caspi et al., 1987).

Childhood temper tantrums had both an indirect and a direct effect on occupational status in mid-life. Adults with a history of ill-temperedness during childhood evidenced lower educational attainment, which in turn led to lower occupational status in mid-life and a more erratic work life. This indirect effect may be explained in terms of continuity through accumulation of the consequences of one's behavioural style (in this case: an "explosive" behaviour pattern). As such, it is similar to the effect that childhood shyness has on occupational achievement and occupational stability.

The statistical analysis also revealed an indirect effect of childhood temper tantrums on occupational success. Higher scores on the ill-temperedness scale were associated with a more erratic work life. This finding suggests that ill-temperedness is a behavioural style that individuals carry with them through life and is re-evoked in situations that are similar to those that originally evoked the maladaptive behaviour. It is well known that children fre-

quently have temper tantrums when they are frustrated or when they are confronted with a controlling authority. When later in life they are confronted with similar types of authority (in school, in the armed forces, or in low-level jobs), their original ill-temperedness may manifest itself as undercontrolled irritability. These outbursts of anger in turn lead to more controlling behaviour from the authority figure and thus to greater frustration, which in turn may induce frequent career switches. In short, continuity of maladaptive behaviours is not just a matter of accumulation of negative effects (e.g., lower education leads to more erratic careers), but it may simply emerge because of triggering: the person acts, the environment reacts and the person reacts back again.

In sum, two types of continuity may account for the influence exerted by childhood personality on important social transitions later in life. The first of these mechanisms, labelled interactional continuity, implies that certain aspects of one's personality persist over time because these interaction styles tend to evoke reciprocal, maintaining reactions from others. This type of continuity will emerge mainly in situations with interactional properties similar to those of the original evoking environment. A second mechanism may be designated as cumulative continuity, which means that certain behaviours (or associated aspects of personality) are sustained through the progressive accumulation of their own consequences. Both mechanisms may be found to operate concurrently. In many cases, occupational outcomes in adults are both cumulative consequences of their childhood personality and contemporary consequences of their current personality (Caspi & Bem, 1990). And both mechanisms combined (i.e., the joint effect of cumulative and contemporary consequences) account for personality stability over longer time periods.

Before we turn to my conclusions, a few critical remarks are in order with regard to all of the analyses on the role of competence and personality. All of the findings are based on a series of studies initiated in the late 1920s and completed by 1982, when the participants were in their mid-life. One could therefore ask oneself if the findings obtained are not determined, at least in part, by the specific historical factors that were at work during the period that the Berkeley studies were conducted. This, however, does not seem to be the case. A more recent replication on German adolescents and young adults yielded analogous results (Shanahan & Reitzle, 1998). One could further ask whether the findings on the impact of planful competence in the domain of work may be extended to women, now that these have entered the workforce in such huge numbers. That this is indeed the case was already confirmed in the Berkeley studies when the work careers of the daughters of

the Berkeley women were examined. Among these young women, high levels of planful competence were associated with more orderly careers and higher occupational status, just as among their fathers in the original analyses of the Berkeley studies (Clausen, 1991a).

Another question is why planful competence should emerge during adolescence, or put differently: can one claim that this planful approach to life is already evident in pre-adolescence or in childhood? Recent research indicates that certain precursors to planful competence do exist at an earlier age, but they do not seem to have an influence on the transition to adulthood or on the subsequent life-course (Shanahan & Reitzle, 1998). The fact that certain precursors to adolescent competence have been uncovered is of course in keeping with Clausen's (1991a) original formulation. In this view, planful competence does not emerge out of the blue during the second decade of life. But the role of environmental antecedents to planful competence (such as high parental income, family intactness, parental, peer and teacher encouragement, and high occupational status aspirations) has always been fully acknowledged within the theory of adolescent competence (Clausen, 1991b).

2.5 | Conclusions

Four general conclusions may be derived from the findings presented in this chapter. First, familial and individual factors during adolescence (and even childhood) influence various aspects of the transition to adulthood (e.g., the timing of home leaving and the distance from, and contact frequency with, parents following this transition). These results of empirical research should broaden our current conceptualisations of the transition to adulthood. Psychological factors, preferably developmental factors, should whenever possible routinely be included in research on early adulthood, along with traditional sociological or demographic variables (such as educational level, occupational career, religion, or social policy).

All of these developmental factors, however, exert their influence along with these contextual factors and interact with other socio-structural and historical causes. It should be pointed out, for instance, that all of the research on familial factors as determinants of the transition to adulthood was conducted in middle-class samples. The constraints in opportunity structures as experienced by minority youth or poor adolescents in general may well overpower all of the effects of familial factors demonstrated in these samples of highly resourceful persons (Sherrod, 1996). The longitudinal studies

on individual factors have typically been conducted on representative samples and, as a result, their findings may generalise more easily to the less affluent strata of society.

Second, various tentative explanatory mechanisms have been advanced to account for developmental influences on young people's entry into adulthood. These theoretical notions emphasise the role of autonomy and relatedness as an 'optimal launching base', or the importance of a planful approach to life decisions. Continuity of adaptation over time is further explained through accumulation of effects and through reciprocal, maintaining reactions, that is, through person-environment interaction.

However, the potential associations among these mechanisms or among familial and individual factors remain unexplored. We can assume, for instance, that shy and ill-tempered children typically score low on adolescent planful competence. We can further surmise that adolescents high on planful competence mainly come from homes where parents generally provided support for their children and actively strived for an optimal balance between autonomy and relatedness. But these alleged associations still have to be borne out by empirical research. In many cases, the direction of causality is another issue that has to be addressed in future research. It is not clear, for instance, whether parent-child conflict leads to problem behaviour in young people which makes them leave home at a very early age, or whether problematic children create family conflict (Sherrod, 1996).

Third, individual (or personality) factors in particular shape the entire lifecourse, and not just the transition to adulthood. Young people's entry into adulthood appears to be a pivotal phase in the life course in that it affects later transitions in significant ways (Hogan & Astone, 1986).

Fourth, longitudinal research seems to suggest that a lifespan theory of adolescent-parent separation and social integration could (and should) be developed (Stattin & Magnusson, 1996). The fact that adolescents who had good relationships with their parents, or who managed to combine their striving for autonomy with their desire for continuing relatedness with their parents, were most successful in their management of the transition to adulthood may have important implications for developmental theories. Classical theories of adolescent-parent separation and subsequent individuation suggest that young people should develop a fair degree of emotional autonomy. This means that in order for them to develop in healthy ways through adolescence, they have to give up childish representations of, and dependencies on, their parents. Ongoing research on this psychological

topic (Goossens, 1997) should also examine whether adolescents who have achieved emotional autonomy from parents negotiate the transition to adulthood more successfully than their age mates who failed to do so.

2.6 | References

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3. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN AUSTRIA

CHRISTIANE PFEIFFER AND VERA NOWAK

3.1 | Introduction

In this chapter we attempt to describe the situation of young people on their way to adulthood in Austria. As is true for other countries (Corijn, 1996), this transition process has been changing over time. Our main focus will be on the question in which sense this change has occurred.

From a demographic point of view adolescence starts at the age of 15 and ends in the mid-twenties. Up to the age of 15, the standard life events of youngsters are relatively similar. The majority is still in education or in apprenticeship and living at their parents' home, unmarried and without children. During the following life period certain significant biographical events occur, including the end of education, the departure from the parental home, the entry into the labour market and the start of the family formation process. In this context status passages do not only regulate transitions, but they can also serve as major reference points for an individual's life planning (Heinz, 1997).

According to the thesis of individualisation, the increasing freedom in decision-making during the 20th century has resulted in a greater variety of individual life courses. The life course of younger people became less standardised than for older generations. For this reason it is more difficult nowadays to draw a sharp line between being an adolescent and being an adult. There has been a steady increase in intermediate living arrangements, such as: young people still being in education and living on their own or

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sharing a flat with others; young people returning home in case they have split up or lost their job; young unmarried and childless couples living together, etc. (Kytir et al., 1994). These living arrangements are not new, but they are more frequent than 30 years ago. From a historical perspective also the decision-making and the individual motivation for one or the other living arrangement may have changed. For example, in Austria the rate of out-of-wedlock childbearing has always been high, but for different reasons. Whereas in former times it was often not possible to get married because of financial or even legal constraints, today personal motives play a more central role. Normative constraints such as to be married if one wants to have a child, became less important over the years. Concerning the variety of living arrangements or the number of births and marriages, the situation of 100 or 150 years ago is more similar to today's than that of the late 1950s and 1960s. The sociological literature refers to the latter period as the 'golden age of the family', a historically unique situation with the highest birth ("Baby-Boom") and marriage rates ever recorded. This unique situation was also reflected in the transition process to adulthood. Family formation occurred earlier than before and after this period (Gisser et al., 1995).

In Austria as in many other European countries, the number of young people living in non-marital unions as well as the number of children born out-of-wedlock have increased over the last years. From a historical perspective Austria has had a long tradition of childbearing before marriage (especially the provinces Carinthia, Salzburg, Upper Austria). This tradition can be traced back to the 19th century. As Kytir (1992) has shown in his analysis of family formation, there was a relatively stable proportion of first births resulting from a *marital* conception since the 1950s. The ups and downs in the proportion of children born out-of-wedlock are strongly associated with the proportion of children born to married women but conceived before marriage. That is, the rise in *non-marital* births goes hand in hand with a decline in births resulting from a *premarital* conception.

In the following paragraphs we will try to point out which changes have occurred in the transition process during the last decades. We expect that the trends observed for other European countries will also show up in the case of Austria, i.e. the events constituting the transition process are increasingly postponed in the life course.

3.2 | Data and methods

The data for this analysis come from the Austrian Fertility and Family Survey (FFS) '96, which was conducted between December 1995 and May 1996. The main purpose of the survey was to collect data concerning the current familial living conditions and the biographies of adults aged 20-54 years (Prinz et al., 1998). A total of 4,581 women and 1,539 men this old were interviewed, who can be considered representative for the corresponding universe in all of Austria as well as in the different (groups of) provinces (Doblhammer et al., 1997).

In the Austrian FFS, in addition to the core sections used in most countries (biographies for births, non-marital and marital unions, education and work), emphasis was placed on migration biographies, conditions in the parental home, family planning and desired family size, as well as opinions and views on social and political issues that have to do with the family.

To ensure international comparability the results in this chapter concern the following birth cohorts: 1951-55, 1956-60, 1961-65, 1966-70. It can be safely assumed that a considerable number of individuals born after 1970 will not yet have experienced the life events under analysis. Therefore, the birth cohorts are confined to the ones above.

As a first step the timing to adulthood is illustrated by cumulative failure distributions (CFD). The window of observation of the transition to adulthood ends for all events at age 30. The proportion minus a 100 per cent consists of persons having experienced the event after this age, or not having experienced it by the time of the interview. The cumulative failure distribution allows to make statements about the proportion having experienced a certain event at a specific age. For each of the six events (leaving the parental home, first cohabitation, first marriage, first child, end of education, entry into the labour market), the CFD is shown by gender and cohort (Figure 3.1).

Another focus of the analysis is on the *sequence of specific pairs of events*. Theoretically, there are 15 pairs of (dis)connections between all events. As it will not be meaningful to discuss each of them separately, only some pairs of events are selected. Persons having experienced both events of each pair are divided into three groups. The first consists of those who had both events within half a year of each other. In the second group are the persons who had the first event more than half a year *before* the second, whereas the

third group pools those who had the first event more than half a year *after* the second.

To explain the underlying forces of the life events under study, in the last section a multi-variate Cox regression model is estimated. This proportional hazard model contains only time-constant variables. For all categories of the covariates the risk of experiencing the life event under study is compared to a particular reference group whose relative risk is set equal to 1.

3.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

3.3.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood

In Table 3.1 one finds summary values for all events under analysis, i.e. quartile ages, inter-quartile ranges (Q3-Q1) and cumulative proportions not (yet) having experienced them by age 25 or 30. The events are: the end of education, first entry into the labour market, leaving the parental home, formation of the first union, first marriage and first birth.

The first event is the *end of education*. In this context some remarks about the educational system in Austria should be made. Basic education lasts 9 years, after which a person can decide whether to finish a lower (without school-leaving exam) or upper secondary education (with school-leaving exam). After a school-leaving examination has been successfully passed, one can go to the university (post-secondary education).

In general, men finished their education later than women did. Even though the number of middle and higher educated women is increasing, the proportion of lower educated women is still higher than that of men. Among men the median age at completing school did not vary significantly across cohorts. Looking at the oldest and youngest cohorts the difference is three months. Whereas women finished education earlier, nearly the same results obtain across cohorts. The percentage of persons having experienced this event by the age of 25 decreased among men as well as among women.

In Austria the government has put much emphasis on establishing a link between the school system and the labour market. The so-called "dual education system" consists of education at school on the one hand, and of on-the-job training on the other. During this period (usually 3 years), young people serve their apprenticeship as employees and, at the same time, attend vocational school.

Table 3.1   Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in Austria, by gender and cohort (in years; months)

	Males Cohort				Females Cohort			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment								
Q1*	16;4	16;5	17;6	17;11	15;0	15;0	15;0	15;11
Q2	18;5	18;2	18;7	18;8	17;8	18;1	18	18;2
Q3	20;1	19;5	20;10	22;8	19;1	19;7	19;4	19;9
Q3-Q1	3;9	3;0	3;4	4;9	4;1	4;7	4;4	3;10
% not at age 25	16	9	19	21	8	10	10	11
Entry into labour market								
Q1	16;4	16;4	17;0	17;6	16;7	16;7	16;4	16;11
Q2	18;8	18;2	18;4	18;9	18;3	18;3	18;2	18;7
Q3	20;5	19;6	20;5	21;1	20;6	20;6	20;1	20;8
Q3-Q1	4;1	3;2	2;5	3;7	3;11	3;11	3;9	3;9
% not at age 25	12	8	10	15	14	12	9	12
Leaving the parental home								
Q1	19;2	19;1	18;11	19;7	18;0	17;10	18;2	18;5
Q2	22;10	22;1	21;5	22;5	20;0	19;10	19;11	20;2
Q3	29;0	26;3	26;9	28;9	23;2	22;5	22;9	23;4
Q3-Q1	9;10	7;2	7;10	9;2	5;2	4;7	4;7	4;11
% not at age 30	22	18	18	23	7	4	5	9
First union								
Q1	21;4	20;9	21;3	21;4	19;2	19;0	18;8	19;4
Q2	24;0	22;1	23;7	24;3	21;0	21;0	20;8	21;10
Q3	27;7	26;9	28;3	-	23;7	25;0	24;3	26;2
Q3-Q1	6;3	6;0	7;0	-	4;5	6;0	5;7	6;10
% not at age 30	11	19	22	36	6	10	8	19
First marriage								
Q1	22;4	22;4	23;10	25;7	19;10	20;2	20;8	22;0
Q2	25;2	25;5	28;5	-	21;11	23;1	23;7	26;4
Q3	29;3	29;10	-	-	26;1	28;8	29;1	-
Q3-Q1	6;11	7;6	-	-	6;3	8;6	8;5	-
% not at age 30	31	33	42	65	13	22	21	36
First child birth								
Q1	23;10	22;8	23;7	·26;0	20;2	21;1	20;9	22;2
Q2	27;2	26;4	28;4	-	22;10	24;4	24;0	25;10
Q3	30;10	33;11	-	-	27;2	29;3	29;0	-
Q3-Q1	7;0	11;3	-	-	7;0	8;2	8;3	-
% not at age 30	26	24	45	64	13	22	22	40

Source: Austrian Fertility & Family Survey (1996), Austrian Institute for Family Studies.

* Q1, Q2, Q3 are first, second and third quartiles.

In this manner they gain practical experience before the end of their educational enrolment. After finishing their education they often stay in the same work place. There is also the possibility to complete a technical secondary education ("Höhere Technische Lehranstalt"), where one gets specific technical knowledge of a practical nature. In the last years there has also been an extension of universities to applied science schools ("Fachhochschulen").

Although women of the oldest cohort *started their first job* on average nearly half a year earlier than men of the same birth cohort, there are no significant gender differences across the other cohorts. The median age among women increased over time with four months. As well as finishing their education earlier than men, women also started working earlier (except those born in 1956-60). Among men the oldest and the youngest cohort started their first job at almost the same median age, i.e. 18 years and 8 respectively 9 months, while those born in 1956-60 and in 1961-65 entered the labour market earlier. Whereas the inter-quartile range among women decreased only slightly, the decrease among men is quite considerable, especially among the three oldest cohorts. Men of the youngest cohort who according to the third quartile (Q3) leave school at a later age than their predecessors, enter the labour market earlier than they finish education. There are two main reasons for this: first, it is quite likely that many of them were part-time employed during their educational enrolment. Another point is that young men can do their national service from the age of 18 up to the age of 35. So it is possible that some chose to do so before starting post-secondary education.

In Austria as in several other European countries women get to live on their own earlier than men. While the median *homeleaving* age among men in the youngest cohort is 22 years and 5 months, women moved out more than two years earlier. Especially among men the timing of this event has changed significantly across cohorts. Men of the oldest and youngest cohorts left their parents later than men born between 1956 and 1965. The same trend can be observed among women, but it is less distinctive. Consequently, young people today (aged 20 to 24) have almost the same timing in leaving the parental home as people aged 50 to 54 years (Doblhammer et al., 1997).

As can be clearly seen, more men than women still live at their parents' house at the age of 30. Concerning the *first* departure from the parental home, it can not be verified that the majority of young people today stay for a longer time with their parents than the generations before them. But it has to be kept in mind that *returning* to the parental home is more frequent than

it was some decades ago. So, just looking at the proportion of young people still living at their parents' home, the picture may be quite different. It should also be remarked that moving out can not always be treated as equivalent to being (financially) independent from one's parents. Besides the financial situation, the perceived employment opportunities and the conditions on the housing market, also the emotional support and benefits received from the parental home influence the timing of leaving it.

In the Austrian FFS the criterium for *starting a first union* is cohabitation. In the following no distinction is made between non-marital and marital unions.

In the last decades a trend towards unmarried cohabitation can be noticed. The median age of starting a union has declined for the male birth cohort of 1956-60, but it increased again afterwards and is among the youngest cohort members higher than it was among older persons. The total percentage of persons not having entered a first partnership by the age of 30 increased rapidly. While among men of the oldest cohort 11 per cent did not have a first union by that age, this percentage among the youngest cohort reaches 36 per cent. Although at a lower level, among women this percentage also increased by a factor of more than 3. This indicates that more young adults postpone their union formation until after the age of 30. This is also illustrated by the rise in the inter-quartile range.

Among men the median age at *first marriage* as well as at first birth can only be analysed up to the birth cohort of 1961-65, because less than 50 per cent of the youngest cohorts had experienced these events by their actual age at the time of the interview (26-30). The age of getting married for the first time has increased among men as well as among women. Whereas the majority of men born in 1951-55 were married already around age 25, those born in 1961-65 had their first marriage more than three years later. A similar trend is observable among women: the postponement of marriage over the three oldest cohorts adds up to almost two years. Further analysis of the FFS data indicates that a clear majority of men and women who started in a non-marital union later married the same partner. More than half of all cohabiting women below age 30 who have a clear opinion on this issue expect to get married within two years. The main reasons for not wanting to marry are that they still feel too young for it or because they first want to test their partnership. This indicates that the marriage option is still considered a real possibility for the future. Only small proportions generally dislike marriage.

Quite considerable changes over time can be observed in the total percentage of persons having experienced this event until the age of 30. Around 70 per cent of men and 87 per cent of women born in 1951-55, but only 45 per cent of men and 64 per cent of women born in 1966-70 had experienced a first marriage until the age of 30.

The timing of the *first birth* looks quite similar, although the observed changes over time are not as significant as for first marriage. Among men the median age has increased from 27 years and 2 months (1951-55) to 28 years and 4 months (1961-65). Women born in 1966-70 had their first birth exactly three years later than women of the oldest birth cohort.

The percentage of men having no children by the age of 30 has risen from 26 per cent (1951-55) to 45 per cent (1961-65). Referring to the same birth cohorts among women, it increased from 13 to 22 per cent. More than one third of the younger women, i.e. those born in 1966-70, have not had their first child by the age of 30.

Our findings show that an almost linear postponement trend is only present for the timing of the first marriage. It is likely that this is due to the very special situation during the 1950s and 1960s, when the median age at first marriage sank in a significant way. This was followed by the period of "liberation movements from traditional values", when the young generation tried to live their lives completely different from their parents. A logical consequence then seems to be to delay marriage. It became popular to leave the parental home at an earlier stage and to share a flat with other people. Simultaneously, the normative pressure to get married if living together with a partner became less important. As non-marital unions became more and more accepted, there was lesser necessity to marry. Furthermore, the better education and the increasing participation of women in the labour market reduced the importance of financial and economic reasons for marriage.

Interestingly, linear trends in postponing the end of educational enrolment and the entry into the labour market are only present for the first quartile (Q1) of men. In this context it should be pointed out that in 1966 the "polytechnic year" was introduced, i.e. nine compulsory school years. This could possibly explain why the Q1 age of women is constantly 15 years for the three oldest cohorts. Although there is no linear postponement across cohorts, it is still the case that men as well as women of the youngest cohort finished their education and entered the labour market later than the other cohorts. It is possible that in order to reveal a more distinctive trend, we would have had to include people born before 1951. In other words, it

appears that the selected birth cohorts (1951-70) for Austria were too complex in terms of their different options of living to find truly homogeneous trends across those cohorts.

3.3.2   *Disconnection from age*

In this section the age relatedness of the events under study and the *changes* in their age relatedness over time are analysed. To be tested is whether the age relatedness across cohorts has declined. Given institutional constraints on education and working careers, it is expected that these careers are more connected to age than the family career.

While the age relatedness of the family career decreases across cohorts, as illustrated by the values for the inter-quartile range (Q3-Q) in Table 3.1, there is no clear pattern across time concerning the educational and the employment careers. For instance, for the youngest cohort the age relatedness of finishing education has decreased among men but increased among women. In this context some remarks on the changing gender differences in the educational system should be made. Over the last decades the proportion of women with secondary or post-secondary education has clearly risen. While in 1955-56 still 80 per cent of all students were men, by 1996-97 the percentage of female students had grown to 44 per cent. Since the educational system plays a very important role in the life course, its expansion has also been regarded as a potential cause of frictions and breaks in the occupational career (Lenhart, 1992).

With regard to the age relatedness of the various life events under study, the available results suggest that *for the younger cohorts* the classical division between the education/working career on the one hand and the family career on the other becomes less and less meaningful. It seems more useful to distinguish three groups: (1) the education/working career; (2) parental leave/formation of a union; and (3) marriage/childbirth. All events constituting one group are both age and time related. While the timing of leaving the parental home, forming a first union and getting married were almost alike among persons born in 1951-55, an important differential between first cohabitation and first marriage can be observed among men and women born in 1961-70. For a considerable number of persons among the older cohorts, the first union was at the same time their first marriage. Since then the proportion of women starting their first union as a married couple has almost linearly decreased. This indicates that for many

youngsters the period between leaving the parental home and forming a first union has become a distinct period of independent living.

3.3.3   (Dis)connection from each other

To get more detailed information about the sequence of the events, in Table 3.2 the time between two specific events is analysed. As a first step, the timing of leaving the parental home in connection with the end of education, the first union as well as the first job is analysed. Around two thirds of all Austrians having experienced both events leave their parental home more than 6 months after the end of the educational enrolment. Even though apprentices or trainees get a small salary and students are often part-time employed, it is for the most part the family who gives them support. Thirteen per cent of women and 8 per cent of men had both events within half a year of each other. This shows that more women tend to complete school while living at home, which is due to the fact that in general women finish their education earlier than men.

Interestingly enough, among the older male cohort the highest proportion had left the parental home more than half a year before they started their first union. In the younger cohort (1966-70) a change is observable in the sense that most of them (48 per cent) experienced both events within half a year of each other. Among women the picture is different. Across all cohorts the majority – up to 60 per cent for those born in the last ten years - had gone out of the parental home and into their first partnership within half a year of each other.

Across cohorts and irrespective of gender, the absolute majority had left the parental home more than half a year after they had entered the labour market. Among men born in 1951-55 and those in 1966-70, the degree of disconnection between these two events is quite similar. And while among them the pattern of leaving the parental home more than half a year before the entry into the labour market is also quite important, for men born in 1956-65 this is much less the case. Here it is an overwhelming majority who first started their job and then (after more than six months) left the parental home.

A second clear disconnection exists between the timing of the first marriage and leaving the parental home. Gender-specific patterns are especially evident among persons born in 1951-55 and in 1961-65. Among the oldest cohort, the relative number of women who left their parents and married within half a year (36 per cent) is almost twice as high as that of

Table 3.2   (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in Austria, by gender and cohort

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
Leaving the parental home and education								
=	7	9	11	7	12	15	11	15
<	30	23	29	35	20	23	24	21
>	63	67	60	58	68	63	65	64
(%)	(90)	(86)	(87)	(77)	(96)	(97)	(97)	(91)
first union								
=	34	41	37	48	49	48	60	57
<	50	43	48	39	35	41	30	34
>	16	17	15	12	17	11	10	9
(%)	(89)	(82)	(75)	(59)	(93)	(93)	(92)	(77)
first job								
=	11	14	14	13	15	18	15	19
<	30	16	24	29	26	24	24	23
>	59	71	63	58	59	57	61	59
(%)	(90)	(82)	(85)	(70)	(95)	(95)	(93)	(85)
Marriage and leaving the parental home								
=	20	27	13	23	36	26	29	23
<	19	12	17	10	14	10	8	7
>	61	61	71	67	49	64	63	70
(%)	(84)	(75)	(55)	(34)	(90)	(85)	(80)	(57)
first union								
=	52	49	31	41	63	48	41	36
<	6	4	2	0	5	3	3	2
>	42	47	68	59	32	49	55	62
(%)	(91)	(86)	(59)	(37)	(92)	(86)	(82)	(59)
First child and first union								
=	19	18	15	7	24	19	16	14
<	9	15	13	6	11	11	14	10
>	73	67	73	87	65	71	70	76
(%)	(88)	(82)	(64)	(31)	(91)	(85)	(81)	(60)
first marriage								
=	23	29	24	20	30	26	26	27
<	19	26	31	21	16	21	28	23
>	58	46	45	59	54	54	45	50
(%)	(86)	(80)	(53)	(26)	(87)	(80)	(74)	(50)

Source: Austrian Fertility & Family Survey (1996), Austrian Institute for Family Studies.

=   both events occurred within 6 months of each other
<   first event preceded second by more than 6 months
>   first event followed second after more than 6 months
(%)   total percentage of persons having experienced both events

men (20 per cent). In contrast, much fewer women than men of the same cohort (49 compared to 61 per cent) married more than half a year after they had left the parental home. This indicates either that the period of living on one's own before marrying was shorter for women than for men, or that marriage as the main reason for leaving the parental home was more important among women.

The number of younger women who have experienced both events within half a year of each other is smaller, while the number who had first left their parents and married more than six months later is now much higher. Having both events within half a year indicates a strong relatedness between moving out for the first time and getting married; this has thus decreased over time. The number of those who got married before they left their parental home has decreased, too. It is likely that the time they lived at the parents' home as a married couple was mainly meant as a temporary arrangement. There could be two reasons for this. Firstly, for those couples who could not yet afford to have an accommodation of their own or who were about to get their own apartment or house, living at their parents' home could have been the best opportunity. Secondly, especially in rural areas, it is likely that there were substantial traditional reasons for living at the parents' home as a married couple. In this case, if one wants to live with a partner, it is the social pressure of being married that seems to influence this pattern.

The (dis)connection between marriage and the first union gives us information about the time spent in a consensual union. Whereas among the two oldest birth cohorts the majority of men and women had their first union and first marriage within half a year, among the two youngest cohorts the majority got married more than half a year after the formation of the first union. This is mainly due to the fact that a considerable number of men and women born in 1951-55 did not live in a non-marital union before marrying. In contrast, living in a consensual union before marriage is a common living arrangement among the younger cohorts. This has also resulted in the postponement of the first marriage.

The majority of men as well as of women had their first child more than half a year after the formation of the first union. This is most obvious among the youngest. Almost three-fourths of men and two-thirds of women born in 1951-55 spent more than half a year together before the first child was born. Among persons born in 1966-70, this percentage has increased to 87 and 76 per cent, respectively. The percentage of persons who experienced both events within half a year has significantly declined over time. As in these cases the woman was either pregnant or the child was already born when the

union started, the changes across cohorts may reflect changes in norms. It seems as if the necessity to start a union in case of a (forthcoming) birth was felt less among the younger cohorts.

Compared to the other (dis)connections, the most significant drop is in the total percentage of men and women having gone through both events until the time of interview. This is mainly due to the fact that the median age at the start of the first union and at the first birth has considerably gone up across cohorts.

Finally, the majority of persons became parents more than half a year after their first marriage. No linear increase or decrease across cohorts in this majority is visible. The proportion of persons having a first birth more than half a year before marriage rose up to the birth cohorts 1961-65, among women as well as among men. In the youngest cohorts a slight decrease can be noticed, whereas the proportion having married more than half a year before they got their first child has grown.

3.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

Multivariate analysis (Cox proportional hazard model) confirms the pattern of differences across cohorts described above. Statistically the most significant are the ones for the first marriage and the first child (Table 3.3). Among men the effect is almost linear: the younger the cohort, the lower the rate of experiencing these life events. Among women the trend is the same, but less pronounced. The most salient gender differences concern the first child. Whereas among older cohorts, women and men face very similar risks of having a first child, among younger cohorts this is no longer the case. The postponement of the family formation process is much stronger among men. Furthermore, especially among younger women, the risk of getting married is much lower than that of having a first child. This finding can be seen as an indication for the increasing number of out-of-wedlock births. Though non-marital cohabitation is a common living arrangement among young people, marriage at a later point in time has hardly lost its attraction.

3.4.1 Impact of the education

Education is another crucial determinant of the transition to adulthood. Our analysis is based on four educational levels: basic education (the reference group), lower secondary (until the age of 15), upper secondary (up to age 18 or 19) and tertiary (college, university) education. This variable measures

Table 3.3   *Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Austria: relative risks*

	Leaving parental home		First union		First marriage		First child	
	males	females	males	females	males	females	males	females
Birth cohorts								
1951-55	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1956-60	1.23	1.10	1.00	0.88*	0.94	0.73*	0.86	0.82*
1961-65	1.18	1.10	0.93	1.00	0.64*	0.73*	0.70*	0.90
1966-70	1.03	1.00	0.68*	0.82*	0.39*	0.54*	0.44*	0.83*
Education								
Basic education	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lower secondary	1.04	0.94	0.97	0.81*	1.01	0.86*	0.93	0.69*
Upper secondary	1.27	0.82*	0.72*	0.60*	0.52*	0.62*	0.52*	0.46*
Tertiary education	1.55*	0.85	0.63*	0.51*	0.65*	0.51*	0.45*	0.38*
Religion								
Catholic - religious	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Catholic - not religious	1.32*	1.20*	1.07	1.20*	0.91	0.86*	0.97	0.93
Other confession - religious	1.28	0.97	1.00	1.06	1.25	1.11	1.14	1.02
Other confession - not religious	1.26	1.08	0.71	1.21	0.69	0.92	1.19	0.83
Without confession	1.70*	1.27*	0.99	1.15	0.58*	0.79*	0.57*	0.58*
Divorce in parental home								
No	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Yes	1.32*	1.25*	0.99	1.10	0.87	0.89	0.97	1.00
Number of siblings in the Parental home								
None	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
One	1.19	1.07	1.14	1.04	1.74*	1.03	1.32	1.20*
Two	1.21	1.19*	0.87	1.03	1.28	1.08	1.22	1.26*
Three	1.37*	1.32*	1.12	1.10	1.37	1.12	1.28	1.33*
Four	1.34	1.43*	0.85	0.98	1.29	1.01	1.22	1.29*
Residence until the age of 15 (number of inhabitants)								
<2.000 inhabitants	0.58*	0.77*	0.67*	0.86	0.76	0.87	0.84	0.90
2.000 -<10.000	0.78	0.74*	0.78	0.77*	0.89	0.72*	0.91	0.88
10.000-<50-000	0.79	0.75*	0.68*	0.73*	0.86	0.70*	0.88	0.75*
50.000- <1mio	1.05	0.79*	0.85	0.77*	0.77	0.65*	0.73	0.80*
>1mio (Vienna)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

* p<.05

Source: Austrian Fertility & Family Survey (1996), Austrian Institute for Family Studies.

the highest successfully completed level of education as stated at the time of the interview. Education beyond basic education increases the risk of leaving the parental home for men, but decreases it for women. This is the only true contrast between the sexes. Both show a significant negative impact of education on the family formation process in general. The strongest effects are on the birth of the first child. Men who finished college or university have less than half the risk of becoming father than men with basic education. The difference is even more pronounced among women; the relative risk of motherhood among graduates decreases to 38 per cent of the reference group.

The hypothesis that the negative impact of education on the rate of the transition process is stronger among women than among men can be confirmed by our findings. Whereas among men one can find the postulated positive effect on leaving the parental home, for women this does not hold. The higher educated a women is, the lower the rate of experiencing any of the events under study. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the opportunity costs of childbearing for higher educated young women are high.

3.4.2   Impact of the religion

In the Austrian FFS religion was measured by the religious affiliation the person says to adhere to, as well as by whether a person describes him- or herself as religious at the time of the interview. The majority of the Austrians are Catholic, although in the last years the number of persons leaving the Catholic Church has increased.

In our analysis significant effects are found among Catholics who describe themselves as not religious, and among persons without confession. Compared to the other groups under study, the rate of leaving the parental home is the highest among these two categories.

The likelihood of marrying among non-religious persons as well as among persons without confession is lower than among religious persons irrespective of confession. This is true for men as well as for women. The connection between religiousness and parenthood leads to an almost similar result, although the differences among women are even stronger than in the case of marriage: non-religious women have a lower rate of first childbearing than religious ones.

Testing the hypothesis mentioned in Chapter 1, the positive effect of religion on marriage and parenthood is confirmed, although our results are

only significant for persons without any confession. This effect - especially in the case of marriage - is stronger among men. Thus, the hypothesis that the impact of religion is stronger among women is not verified.

3.4.3   Impact of the parental home

Analysing the impact of the parental home on the transition to adulthood two main aspects are considered: the experience of a divorce in the parental home and the number of siblings.

With regard to the *impact of a parental divorce*, statistically significant results are only obtained for leaving the parental home. Women as well as men who have not experienced a divorce of their parents have a considerable lower risk to leave the parental home than those whose parents got divorced. This trend is more pronounced among men than among women. Concerning the other life events – first union, first marriage, first child – no significant impact was found of a divorce in the parental home. Further analysis will be necessary to explain why this impact is so event-specific.

The *number of siblings* has also a significant impact on leaving the parental home. As shown in Table 3.3, this effect is much stronger for a woman than for a man. The more brothers/sisters she has, the higher the rate of leaving the parental home. Persons having grown up without siblings have the lowest risk to move out. It may be that it is more difficult for parents to provide the right conditions for staying at home to three or more children than to one. Therefore, living together with many siblings may encourage leaving the parental home and, therewith, early independence. In this context it would be interesting to distinguish between the order of births and to see if and how the results differ.

As persons with siblings have a higher risk of leaving the parental home, of having a first child and of getting married, they seem to be more family-oriented than persons without siblings. Whereas the effect on first marriage is stronger among men, the one on parenthood is stronger among women. There are no significant findings related to the first union. This indicates that persons with siblings have a higher risk of leaving the parental home, but not necessarily because they want to form a first union. Other living arrangements are also available to them.

Another indicator of the parental home experience is the *place of residence until the age of 15*. This should reveal the difference in the transition

process between urban and rural areas. The reference category chosen is Vienna, the only city with more than 1 million inhabitants. This turned out to be useful because the difference between Vienna and other cities is quite considerable. Starting the analysis it was assumed that people having grown up in rural areas are more likely to experience the transition later than those in urban areas.

In general there is no linear impact, but people who spent their childhood in Vienna have indeed always the highest risk to experience the events under study. Regardless of whether the place of residence until the age of 15 was a small village or town, women who grew up in such places have all significantly lower risks of leaving the parental than women who grew up in the capital of Austria. Among men one finds an even stronger positive association between the number of inhabitants and leaving the parental home: the smaller the village, the lower the risk to move out. This indicates that in agricultural areas traditional patterns are still predominant, i.e., sons are less likely to leave the parental home than daughters, because they are set to inherit the farm. Concerning the formation of the first union, no clear pattern is visible, although the impact among men appears somewhat stronger than among women. Men who spent their childhood in small villages have a significantly lower first union risk. Those staying at home in order to take over the farm can only start a first union when the partner moves in, which mostly occurs at the time of marriage. A negative impact on the marriage behaviour among women is evident: the bigger the city, the lower their risk of getting married. But as already mentioned, the hazard rate of first marriage as well as of first parenthood is highest in Vienna.

This could possibly be because of fewer normative constraints, a less restricted labour market or better housing conditions for youngsters. Though the trend is not linear, the likelihood of getting married and having a first child decreases with the number of inhabitants. This would confirm the thesis that the transition process to adulthood is more age related in rural areas. In a further step it should be investigated whether that age relatedness could also be interpreted as a sign of a more institutionalised transition process.

3.5 | Discussion and conclusions

Summarising our results it can be said that the postponement effects are strongest in the case of the family formation process. Postponement in finishing education and entering the labour market is - especially among

women - not so pronounced as in other countries. Probably the differences across cohorts would have been bigger if we had included people born before 1950. As women were allowed to go to university since 1920, approximately, one can expect that especially the generation which attended school during and shortly after the second world war would show the most distinctive pattern.

People of the youngest birth cohort (1966-70) had a very similar timing of leaving the parental home compared to the oldest cohort under study (1951-55). The often proclaimed thesis of a delayed parental homeleaving among youngsters is only accurate in respect of those birth cohorts who left their parents at a very early stage in time; these are mainly the birth cohorts 1956-65.

The period when youngsters leave the parental home and start a first union seems to constitute a new period in their life course, a period that is less related to the family formation process. Therefore, we can define three groups of life events which compose different periods in the life course: firstly, the end of education and the entry into the labour market; secondly, the departure from the parental home and the first cohabitation; and thirdly, marriage and parenthood. In Austria, as in many other European countries, the family formation process (including first marriage and first birth) is being postponed among the younger cohorts. An almost linear postponement trend is however only present for the timing of the first marriage. Interestingly, having the first child is being postponed to a lesser extent than getting married. Among the youngest cohort the median age of having a first birth is lower than that of getting married, which is indicative of the increasing number of non-marital births. But these results show only general trends and should not be interpreted as 'sharp cuts' in the life course. As often pronounced in literature (see for example Hullen, 1998), it is not always easy to "fix" the transition between certain biographical spheres when they get more and more "indistinct" from each other.

Our results from the Cox regression model show a strong negative effect of the educational attainment on the likelihood to start a first union, to get married and to have a first birth. This effect is stronger among women than among men. This indicates that higher educated women mostly plan to establish their career before marrying and having a family. Whereas among women there are only negative effects of education on the transition process, among men the rate of leaving the parental home increases with the level of education.

Concerning the impact of the religion on the transition process, statistically the most significant findings are for people without confession. They face a considerably lower risk of having a first marriage and a first birth. Obviously, this group stands out against the others, even against those who describe themselves as not religious. As they also have a clearly higher risk of moving out from their parents' home, this could be an indication for a lesser family orientation among them.

Besides individual, familial and structural factors, the Austrian family and social welfare policy may be seen as an additional explanation for our results. For instance, the marriage boom in 1987 was due to the fact that it had just been announced that the marriage allowance would be abolished. Also the cut in the birth allowance has resulted in a temporary drop in fertility shortly after the introduction of this policy measure. But to us it seems that the introduction of policy measures plays only a secondary role in the timing of the transition process to adulthood. Other factors such as, for instance, personal life concepts or individual and familial factors appear to be much more decisive. Because the transition process is a long-term process, we believe the impact of policy measures to be relatively short-lived. In order to make their effects visible, it would be necessary to sample one-year rather than five-year birth cohorts (see for example the chapter on Norway, this volume).

3.6 | References

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Figure 3.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in Austria, inverted survival curves, by gender and cohort

Completion of schooling, by gender and cohort
Base : all persons born between 1951 and 1970

Men (1951-1970)   Women (1951-1970)
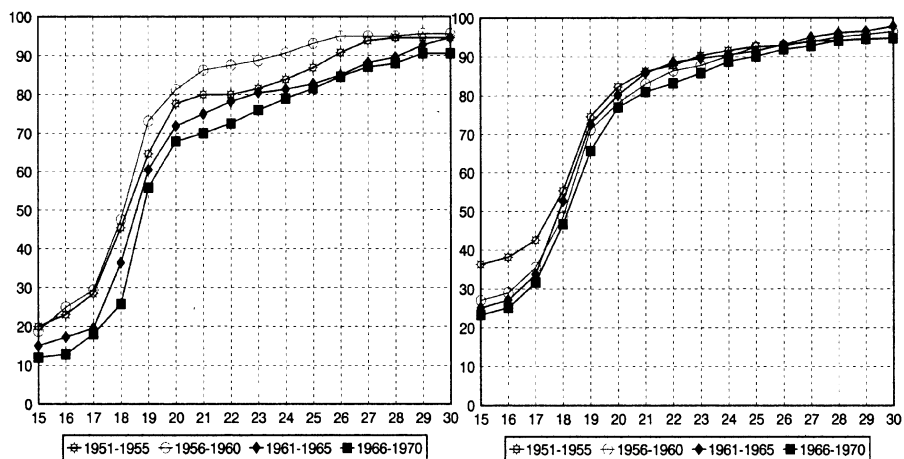
Source: Family & Fertility Survey 1996 in Austria, ÖIF.

First entry into the labour market, by gender and cohort
Base : all persons born between 1951 and 1970

Men (1951-1970)   Women (1951-1970)
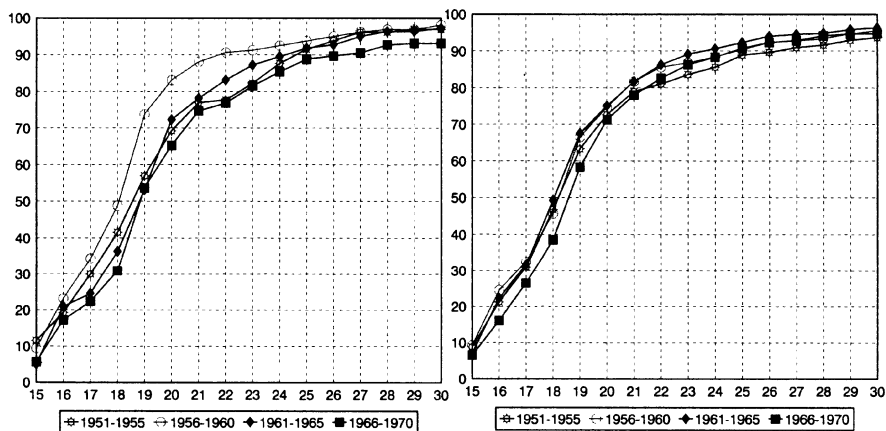
Source. Family & Fertility Survey 1996 in Austria, ÖIF

Figure 3.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in Austria, inverted survival curves, by gender and cohort (cont.)

Leaving the parental home in Austria, by gender and cohort
Base : all persons born between 1951 and 1970

Men (1951-1970)　　　　　　　　　　　　　Women (1951-1970)
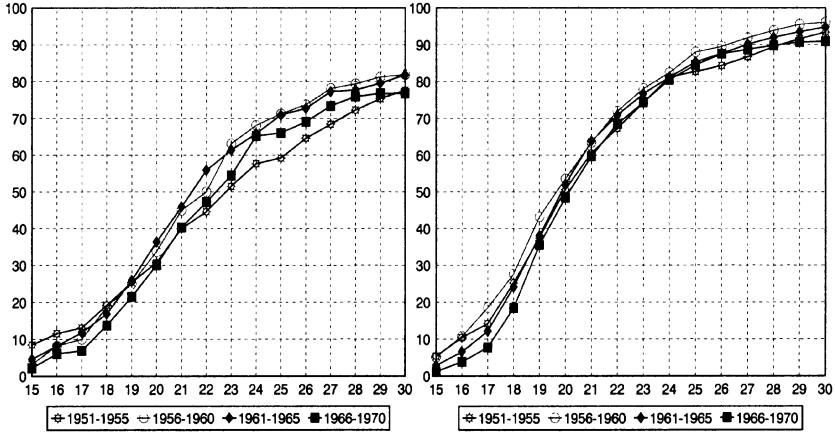
Source· Family & Fertility Survey 1996 in Austria, ÖIF.

Timing of the first unmarried or married cohabitation in Austria, by gender and cohort
Base : all persons born between 1951 and 1970

Men (1951-1970)　　　　　　　　　　　　　Women (1951-1970)
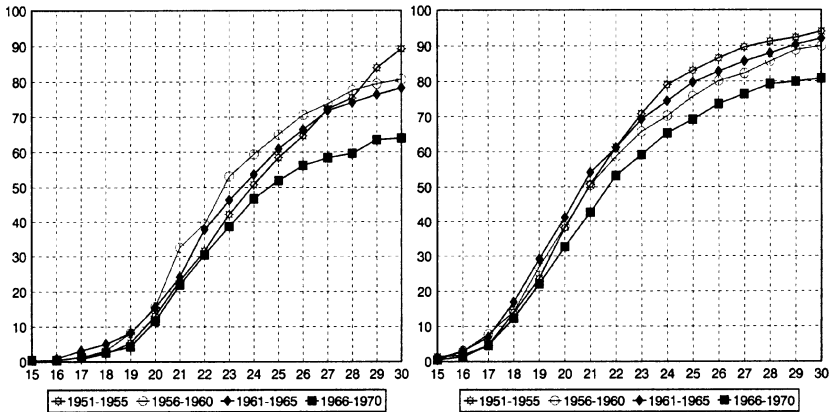
Source. Family & Fertility Survey 1996 in Austria, ÖIF.

Figure 3.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in Austria, inverted survival curves, by gender and cohort (cont.)

Timing of the first marriage in Austria, by gender and cohort

Base : all persons born between 1951 and 1970

Men (1951-1970)　　　　　　　Women (1951-1970)

1951-1955　1956-1960　1961-1965　1966-1970
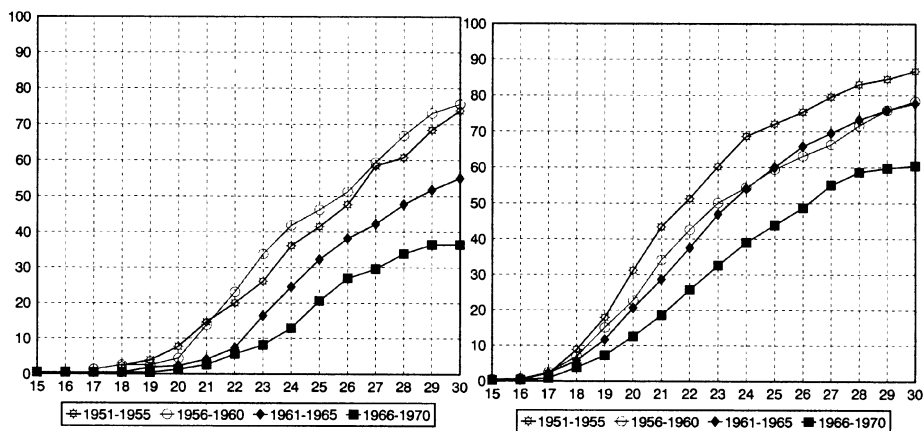
Source. Family & Fertility Survey 1996 in Austria, ÖIF.

Timing of the birth of a first child in Austria, by gender and cohort

Base . all persons born between 1951 and 1970

Men (1951-1970)　　　　　　　Women (1951-1970)

1951-1955　1956-1960　1961-1965　1966-1970
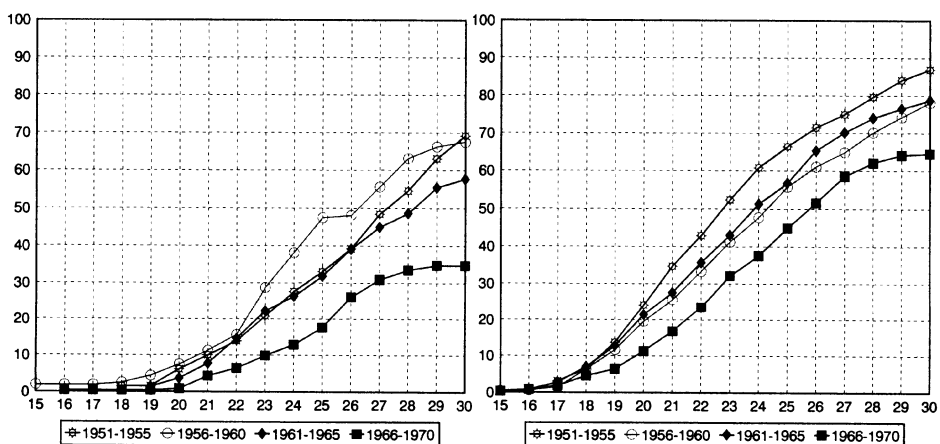
Source: Family & Fertility Survey 1996 in Austria, ÖIF.

4. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN BRITAIN

ANN BERRINGTON

4.1 | Introduction

In this Chapter we review changes in the timing of some of the key milestones on the way to adulthood - leaving home, partnership formation, entry into marriage and parenthood - for cohorts born in Britain between the early 1950s and late 1960s. Since the UK did not participate in the UN ECE Fertility and Family Survey Project we piece together information from a variety of different sources so as to make as many comparisons as possible of the British situation with the other European countries. We refer to Britain rather than the United Kingdom as most of the data sources cover only the former. Indeed, published data from vital registration generally refer only to England and Wales. Having examined cohort changes in the timing and sequences of events in Section 2, we then focus on one specific cohort born in Britain in 1958 who have been followed up since birth in the National Child Development Study. For this cohort we analyse, using a life course approach, the effect of family background and current life course experiences on the timing of transitions to adulthood. First, however, we briefly review the changing socio-economic context within which young adults are making their passage to adulthood.

There have been a number of socio-economic changes in Britain over the past two decades, which have influenced the way in which young people make their transition to adult life. Central among these are the decline of the youth labour market and the increase in government sponsored training (Raffe, 1987; Ashton et al., 1990), reductions in the entitlements of young adults to social

security benefits (Harris, 1989), and the decline in the youth housing market (Jones, 1987; 1995). We have witnessed an increase in the age at which young adults leave education and training. Young people are increasingly likely either to stay on in school to take 'A levels', to attend vocational courses at colleges of further education, or to undertake government sponsored training (Mizen, 1995). For example, the percentage of 18 year old women in education and training increased from one third in 1986 to 59 per cent in 1996 (ONS, 1998a). The expansion in post-18 higher education has been even more impressive, particularly during the early 1990s, with one in three entering higher education in 1995/6 as compared to one in six in the late 1980s and one in twenty in the 1960s.

At the same time employment opportunities for young adults have become increasingly poor (Raffe, 1987). Unemployment rates (ILO definition) among men and women in their teens and early twenties are significantly higher than the average for the whole population, and they fluctuate more widely. Unemployment was particularly high in the early to mid-1980s (with around 18 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women aged 20-24 unemployed). Unemployment rates declined in the late 1980s (to around 10 per cent of men and 8 per cent of women aged 20-24 in 1990), before rising once again in the 1990s. Currently the levels of unemployment are relatively modest in comparison with other developed countries such as Spain, but they compare less favourably with the situation in Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany where only one in ten is unemployed (ONS, 1998a).

Much attention in Britain has focused on the way in which the restructuring of the youth labour market, and changes in the provision of social security benefits have increased the dependence of young people on their parents for housing and financial support. During the 1980s it was commonly assumed that these changes would act to delay the timing of leaving the parental home and family formation (Willis, 1984; Wallace, 1987; Harris, 1989). However, empirical evidence indicates a more complex relationship. Cross-sectional analyses of Labour Force Survey data found that unemployed teenagers (and those on government training schemes) were more likely to have left and be living away from home (Murphy and Sullivan, 1986; Berrington and Murphy, 1994). Longitudinal data from the Scottish Young People's Survey also suggested that the unemployed were more likely to leave at an early age, but that they were also more likely to return (Jones, 1995). However, Murphy and Wang (1998) analysing data from the British Household Panel Survey suggest that between the mid-1960s and mid-1970s there was an increase in the rate of leaving home, but that this trend subsequently reversed due to the falling economic prospects of young adults.

Berrington and Murphy (1994) question whether there is a straightforward relationship between increased unemployment and the delay in marriage in Britain, highlighting the fact that first marriage rates began to fall in the early 1970s, predating the rise in youth unemployment. Furthermore, the decline in marriage took place in a variety of European countries irrespective of their particular economic climate. Irwin (1995) suggests that much of the 'youth research' of the 1980s focused exclusively on the impact of unemployment on the transition to adulthood. She argues that the deferral of marriage and parenthood relate to the joint processes of the decline in young men's wages relative to adult wages, and to the increase in young women's wages relative to young men's. These processes have resulted in the increased importance of the female wage to household resources, and the decline in the income position of young adults relative to general consumption standards. Other authors emphasise the role of ideational change and increased individualisation in encouraging the delay in marriage and the increase in non-marital cohabitation (Van de Kaa, 1987; Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 1988).

4.2 | Data and methods

Due to data limitations we do not attempt to analyse cohort changes in the timing of leaving full-time education or entry into the labour force, but concentrate on demographic transitions: leaving home, entry into first partnership, marriage and parenthood.

4.2.1   Vital registration

All marriages and births are registered within the vital registration system. Annual age-specific marriage and fertility rates, together with cohort estimates of the proportions ever-married in England and Wales are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), formerly the Office for Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). These marriage and fertility statistics are valuable in that they provide up-to-date information for recent birth cohorts. However, whilst the age of the mother is always recorded at the time of birth registration, the age of the father is only recorded if the father's name is entered into the register. For this reason only female cohort and period age-specific fertility rates are routinely published by ONS. In the following analyses we therefore use retrospective fertility data collected from British men within the National Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles Survey (see below) to investigate cohort changes in the timing of parenthood for men. Since we are using different data sources for men and women, the results shown in Figure 4.1 are not strictly comparable.

4.2.2   Routine government surveys

Many of the UK Government surveys collect cross-sectional information on the partnership status and living arrangements of young adults. UK demographers have either tended to analyse data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) or the General Household Survey (GHS). These annual surveys, particularly the LFS with its larger sample size, provide a valuable time series so that we can analyse changes over time in the propensity of young adults to be living within the parental home or elsewhere (Murphy and Sullivan, 1986; Berrington and Murphy, 1994). The GHS is a relatively small survey (around 10,000 households annually), but it is the only annual, nationally representative survey in Britain to collect a marriage history and, for women, a fertility history. Up until the present the GHS has not collected a full cohabitation history, asking information only about current non-marital cohabitation and spells of non-marital cohabitation prior to marriage. Hence the GHS has yielded important evidence as to the increase in premarital cohabitation in Britain but provides an incomplete record of partnerships which are no longer continuing at the time of the survey (Haskey, 1995).

4.2.3   Specialist sexual behaviour surveys

We must look to the 1990/1991 National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NSSAL) to estimate the timing of entry into first (non-marital or marital) partnership, and entry into parenthood for men. Recent analyses have used these data to investigate the relationship between parental background characteristics and the timing of first birth (Kiernan and Hobcraft, 1997).

4.2.4   Longitudinal surveys

Ideally, retrospective or longitudinal data are required in order to analyse the sequence and timing of transitions to adulthood, and to examine the inter-dependencies of these transitions. In comparison with other countries, notably the United States, there is a paucity of such data in Britain. Recent evidence concerning rates of demographic transitions has become available from the British Household Panel Survey. This is a relatively small survey following up around 5,000 households annually since 1991. By comparing the characteristics of those living within sample households at each successive wave we can calculate annual rates of experiencing various demographic events such as partnership formation and dissolution, childbearing, and leaving

home (Ermisch, 1996; Murphy and Wang, 1998). In addition, within the second sweep of the panel in 1992 a comprehensive event history questionnaire was administered to both men and women. This included a full cohabitation and fertility history. These retrospective data have provided some insights regarding, for example, the increasing popularity of premarital cohabitation among younger cohorts (Ermisch, 1995) and the transition to fatherhood (Burghes et al., 1997). However, the relatively small sample size of the BHPS is a constraint to in-depth inter-cohort analyses.

The second main source of longitudinal information are the national birth cohort studies of which there are three, following up samples of individuals born in 1946 (Kiernan and Diamond, 1983), 1958 (Shepherd, 1995) and 1970 (Bynner et al., 1997). Data from the 1958 birth cohort have previously been used by both Kerckhoff (1990) and Kiernan (1991) to examine the timing and sequence of transitions to adulthood up to age 23. In this Chapter we extend these analyses and look at the determinants of the timing of transitions up to age 33. The rich prospective and retrospective data collected within these birth cohort studies allow researchers to investigate the way in which parental and family background characteristics affect young people's trajectories out of the parental home into first partnership and parenthood (Kiernan and Diamond, 1983; Kiernan, 1992; Ní Bhrolcháin et al., 1994; Cherlin et al., 1995; Berrington and Diamond, 1998). The National Child Development Study (NCDS) has provided one of the few national data sources of reasons for leaving the parental home, and the probability of returning home (Jones, 1987; Kiernan, 1991; Ermisch, 1996).

4.2.5   Methods

For each of the demographic transitions to adulthood we plot the percentage having achieved each event by exact age, as measured in completed years (Figure 4.1). The median age refers to the age at which 50 per cent of the population have already completed the transition, with the remaining 50 per cent having yet to do so. In Table 4.1 ages are expressed as years and months. When using aggregate level data from published sources, median and quartiles are estimated graphically. For the remaining transitions, the medians and quartiles are estimated directly from the individual-level survey data.

For our analyses of the determinants of the timing of these transitions we use individual-level data from the NCDS. All those born in Britain between 3-9 March 1958 (around 17,000 individuals) have been followed up in a number of sweeps, at ages 7, 11, 16, 23 and 33. The following analyses are based upon the sample of individuals who responded at both age 23 and 33. The

demographic characteristics of this sample are broadly similar to those for the national 1958 cohort, although the sample under-represents those more socio-economically disadvantaged and those with more complex partnership histories (Shepherd, 1995; Berrington and Diamond, 1998). At age 33 respondents were given a self-completion event-history questionnaire in which they were asked to recall the dates (month and year) of housing moves (including leaving home), entry into and exit from partnerships, and the dates of birth of their children (Berrington, 1995; Di Salvo and Smith, 1995). A partnership is defined as "living together for a month or longer". The partnership and childbearing histories were then double-checked with the respondent in a face-to-face interview. Cleaned data from these retrospective event histories are used to calculate the age at which leaving home, entry into first partnership, entry into marriage and entry into parenthood occurred.

We use a piecewise-constant exponential hazards model to estimate the effect of covariates on the hazard of experiencing each transition between age 15 and 30 (Allison, 1995). Duration to the event (years since age 16) is split up into eight two-year intervals. The hazard of experiencing the event is assumed to be constant within each two-year period. Background covariates are chosen so as to test the hypotheses put forward in Chapter 1, but they also include those found from previous analyses of these data to be important predictors of demographic events in young adulthood (Kiernan, 1992; Cherlin et al., 1995; Berrington and Diamond, 1998).

Fixed covariates entered in the model are: mother's age at her first birth; father's occupational social class (Registrar General's Classification); mother's age at leaving school; geographical region of residence (measured at age 16); frequency of attendance at church/religious meetings (measured at age 23)[1]. Time-varying covariates entered into the model are: current educational level (measured as years of education) and current educational enrolment.

The respondent's educational level changes over the life course and is calculated as the cumulative years of education experienced since age 11. Those with no educational qualifications are identified as having 3 years of educational experience. Those who have completed 'CSE' and 'O-level' qualifications at age 16 are assumed to have 5 years education, those with 'A-

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[1]   Given that religiosity is measured at age 23, there is a potential for reverse causation, with religiosity potentially being the result of previous demographic transitions. However, other competing risk analyses of entry into first partnership after age 23 suggest that the effect of religiosity remains the same as for younger ages (Berrington and Diamond, 1998).

level' and equivalent qualifications are assumed to have 7 years, whilst those graduating with a degree accumulate 10 years of educational experience. Individuals retain their accumulated years of education once they leave full-time education. Respondents are assumed to remain continuously within full-time education until they reach their highest level of education. Hence, those who report having 'O-levels' as their highest qualification are assumed to leave school at age 16, and are coded in the age interval 17-18 as having left full-time education. Those who have first degrees are assumed to leave at age 21, and are coded in the age interval 23-24 as having left full-time education.

Model fitting was undertaken manually, using forward and backward selection. The likelihood ratio test is used to examine changes in model fit. We compare twice the positive difference in the log-likelihoods of two models for the associated change in degrees of freedom. Main effects and interactions found to significantly improve model fit ($p<0.05$) are retained in the final parsimonious models shown in Table 4.3 The baseline age interval used is 20-21 years. The effect of many of the covariates is found to change according to current age as demonstrated by the interactions in the lower half of the table. The exponential of the coefficient represents the relative change in the risk of experiencing the event associated with that level of the covariate, as compared with the baseline category (given in brackets). Positive coefficients are thus associated with a greater chance of experiencing the transition, negative ones with a smaller chance. For each transition we begin by fitting a parsimonious model including only the parental and early life course factors (Model 1). We then fit a second model including the respondents' own characteristics (their religiosity, educational attainment and whether they are currently enrolled in full-time education). In this way we are able to examine the way in which parental characteristics affect the timing of transitions to adulthood through their impact on education.

4.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

4.3.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood

In Britain, we lack nationally representative data to allow us to examine changes in the timing of leaving home across all of these birth cohorts. We do have detailed information on leaving home for the 1958 cohort. Figure 4.1 shows the percentages of those who have ever left the parental home by exact age according to their reason for first departure. Women leave home earlier than men (median ages 20;4 and 22;5, respectively). Rates of departure increase sharply among those aged 18 associated with the move away from the

parental home in order to attend higher education. The percentage having left the parental home then continues to increase steadily, levelling off for women in their mid-twenties and men in their late twenties. By age 30, only 11 per cent of men and 5 per cent of women born in 1958 remained living in the parental home.

The majority of the 1958 cohort left home to live with a partner, with fewer individuals leaving to live with friends or on their own. This cohort reached age 16 in 1974 and hence their experience is of limited relevance to those leaving home in the 1990s. Other evidence suggests that the timing of leaving home may not have changed significantly for subsequent cohorts. Comparison of cross-sectional data from the Labour Force Survey suggests that the cross-over age at which 50 per cent of the respondents were found to be living away from the parental home increased only slightly from 22;4 for men and 20;5 for women in 1981 to 22;8 and 20;6 years in 1989 (Berrington and Murphy, 1994). There was some evidence however, that whilst more educated men and women were increasingly likely to be living away from the parental home, those with lower levels of education and those in manual occupations were increasingly likely to remain in the parental home over the 1980s.

More recently, analysis of the home leaving experience of young adults living within households followed up annually within the BHPS suggests that the median age of leaving home during the early 1990s was around 22 for men and 21 for women (Ermisch, 1996), similar to the 'cross-over ages' calculated above.

It is well known that the age at first leaving home provides only a limited insight into the often complex and protracted process of leaving (and returning) home. It is thought that in Britain the age at which young adults *first* leave home has declined but that the percentage *returning* home has increased (Jones, 1995). The NCDS has provided some unique insights into the characteristics of those who return home (Kiernan, 1991; Ermisch, 1996). Between one-quarter and one-fifth of those born in Britain in 1958 had returned to the parental home by age 33. Not surprisingly, the percentage who return is lowest among those who leave to live with a partner, and highest among those leaving to live away as a student, or to live with friends (Ermisch, 1996). These patterns suggest that living as a student or with friends is more of a transitory phase prior to full independence (Jones, 1987; 1995).

Table 4.1 *Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in Britain, by gender and cohort (years; months)*

	Males Cohort				Females Cohort			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
First union[1]								
Q1*	21;4	21;8	21;10	-	19;4	19;5	20;1	19;8
Q2	23;8	24;3	24;3	-	21;3	21;6	22;4	-
Q3	27;3	27;6	-	-	24;0	24;8	-	-
Q3-Q1	5;11	5;10	-	-	4;8	5;3	-	-
% not at age 30	16	16	-	-	8	9	-	-
First marriage[2]								
Q1	21;7	22;3	23;10	25;2	19;5	20;0	21;1	22;4
Q2	24;3	25;9	28;3	-	21;6	22;5	24;6	-
Q3	29;6	-	-	-	24;8	27;3	-	-
Q3-Q1	7;11	-	-	-	5;3	7;3	-	-
% not at age 30	24	31	44	-	14	19	29	-
First child birth[3]								
Q1	24;5	25;2	-	-	20;10	22;1	22;9	22;11
Q2	28;8	29;3	-	-	25;4	26;7	27;9	28;5
Q3	-	-	-	-	30;9	33;0	-	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	-	9;11	10;11	-	-
% not at age 30	43	47	-	-	28	35	41	-

Source: [1]*National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles*
[2]*Office for Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS)/Office for National Statistics (ONS, 1995) Marriage and Divorce Statistics*
[3]*Data for males from National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles, data for females from OPCS/ONS Birth Statistics*

* Q1, Q2, Q3 are quartiles

Figure 4.1 shows the cumulative percentage ever-married by age for the 1953, 1958, 1963 and 1968 England and Wales birth cohorts. The 1953 cohort was making its transition to adulthood in the late 1960s and early 1970s during a marriage boom. By age 30, 76 per cent of men and 86 per cent of women had married; a level of marriage not seen in either historical cohorts during the 19th and early 20th century, or among more recent cohorts. According to Kiernan and Eldridge (1987), during the 1960s women from different socio-economic backgrounds started to marry at different ages, but within each social group, a clear clustering effect was evident suggesting strong cultural norms governing the timing of marriage. "Marriage was seemingly inevitable and young women were expected to have married by their early twenties" (Kiernan and Eldridge, 1987, p. 60).

Since the early 1970s first marriage rates in Britain have plummeted, as they have in many other developed countries (Van de Kaa, 1987). As a result, the age at which 25 per cent have ever-married (Q1) increased for men from 21;7 for those born in 1953 to 25;2 for those in 1968 (Table 4.1). Among women Q1 increased from 19;5 to 22;4. It remains to be seen whether these younger cohorts are simply delaying marriage, and hence will eventually catch up at later ages, or whether they will reject marriage altogether resulting in an increase in the proportions who never marry.

The decline in first marriage rates in Britain has been partially counteracted by increases in non-marital cohabitation (Murphy, 1997). Cross-sectional data from the GHS suggest that the percentage of single women aged 18-49 currently cohabiting more than trebled from 8 per cent in 1979, to 26 per cent in 1995 (ONS, 1997). Premarital cohabitation has become the norm; around 70 per cent of spinsters marrying in the early 1990s cohabited with their future spouse prior to marriage, as compared with just 3 per cent of those marrying during the late 1960s (Haskey, 1995). Figure 4.1 shows, using data from the NSSAL, how the transition to first partnership has in fact remained remarkably stable over time. We have seen only a slight increase in the median age at first partnership from 23;8 and 21;3 for men and women born in the early 1950s to 24;3 and 22;4 for those born in the early 1960s. More recent data are required for the youngest cohorts to see whether entry into non-marital cohabitation has continued to offset the move away from marriage. Cross-sectional data from the GHS suggest that cohabitation has not fully compensated for the decline in marriage, and that increasingly young adults are living in non-family units (Murphy, 1997).

Figure 4.1 shows the percentage of those who have had a live birth by age for male and female cohorts. In comparison with the transitions described thus far, entry into parenthood is far less age dependent, with the percentage who have had a live birth increasing almost linearly with age. Even among the 1950s birth cohorts around one half of men and one third of women had yet to make this transition at age 30. The data for women from vital registration are more complete and show that between the 1953 cohort and the 1963 cohort entry into parenthood was delayed to later ages. Q1 increased almost two years from 20;10 to 22;9. The pace of change then slowed for the most recent birth cohort of 1968. This pattern is in contrast with the continued delay in entry into marriage as seen in Figure 4.1, and is associated with a recent increase in non-marital fertility.

4.3.2 Disconnection from age

As we move through the various types of transition, from leaving home to entering parenthood, we see an increased age range over which the transition takes place (Table 4.1). For women born in 1958 the inter-quartile range (Q3-Q1 in years;months) is 4;1 for leaving home (not shown), 5;3 for first partnership, 7;3 for first marriage, and 10;11 for first parenthood. As found in other countries, the age range over which the transitions to adulthood take place is generally larger for men than for women (Corijn, 1996). In Chapter 1 it was hypothesised that the destandardisation of the life course, and in particular the weakened age differentiation, would result in an increase in the age range over which these transitions occur for more recent cohorts. As can be seen in Figure 4.1, most transitions have become less age related. For example, the inter-quartile range for entry into parenthood increased by one year between the 1953 and 1958 female cohorts. These trends are similar to that observed by Corijn (1996) for young adults in Flanders. There is also a great deal of variation in the ultimate percentage who experience each transition by age 30; of those born in the late 1950s, only one half of men and two thirds of women have become parents. More recent data are required before we will know whether some individuals will delay entry into parenthood to such an age that they will forego this aspect of adulthood altogether. On the basis of current trends in entry into marriage and parenthood we would question the hypothesis put forward in Chapter 1 that the age destandardisation process has any natural limits such that most individuals complete these transitions by age 35.

4.3.3 Disconnection from each other

Not only have the events marking the transition of young adults to adulthood become less age dependent, they have become less connected to one another. The 1960s was a period of particular uniformity in terms of demographic transitions in early adulthood in Britain, in comparison with either historical patterns or recent years. Following the Second World War, entry into marriage began to take place at younger ages, so that by the late 1960s leaving home was generally synonymous with getting married, although for some individuals post-war housing shortages meant that leaving home often took place after marriage (Anderson, 1983).

Since the 1960s leaving home has increasingly been disconnected from the timing of entry into marriage, with more young adults leaving for educational and job reasons. Nevertheless, as we saw in Figure 4.1, leaving home to live with a partner remained the most common trajectory for men and women born

in Britain in 1958. A small minority (between 6 and 8 per cent) married their spouse whilst remaining within the parental home (Table 4.2). Whilst the age at which young adults leave the parental home has changed rather little, the living arrangements upon leaving have changed greatly. Estimates from the BHPS suggest that among those leaving home in the early 1990s the percentage leaving to live with a partner has declined to just 36 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women (compared to 55 and 60 per cent for those born in 1958), whilst the percentage leaving to live as a student or in some other non-family household has increased (Ermisch, 1996). Data from the GHS suggest that the increase in non-family living has been greatest among more advantaged socio-economic groups (Murphy, 1997).

During the 1950s sexual intercourse took place largely within marriage and hence the birth of the first child generally occurred after marriage. During the 1960s, the relaxation of sexual attitudes was associated with the decline in the age at first sexual intercourse. Sexual activity became increasingly separated from the process of marriage (Lewis and Kiernan, 1996). With the use of modern contraception - particularly oral contraceptives - being fairly minimal during the 1960s, many women became pregnant. As a consequence the 1960s saw the peak in so-called shot-gun weddings with around 22 per cent of all first marriages taking place in 1964 having a premaritally conceived birth (OPCS, 1987). During the 1970s, cohabitation among never married men and women started to become more popular. Increasingly, entry into first partnership became disconnected from entry into marriage. The 1958 British cohort members who reached aged 20 in 1978 were some of the first to experience this change. Unmarried cohabitation was the first partnership type for 45 per cent of men and 38 per cent of women. Of these partnerships, the majority had translated into marriage (60 per cent) or had broken down (30 per cent) by age 33 (Berrington and Diamond, 1998).

Whilst the 1970s heralded the dawn of unmarried cohabitation, childbearing remained largely within the confines of legal marriage until the early 1980s. Indeed the overall percentage of births that took place outside of marriage increased only slightly between 1964 and 1977 (from 7 to 10 per cent). This is reflected in the relatively high percentage of first births among the 1958 cohort which occurred following entry into marriage. Only 7 per cent of first births to women born in Britain in 1958 took place at least six months prior to marriage. Around one in 10 births took place around the time of the marriage, with the remaining taking place after six months of marriage (Table 4.2). It was during the 1980s that the percentage of births taking place outside of marriage increased dramatically, up to 19 per cent in 1985, 28 per cent in 1990 and 36 per cent in 1996 (ONS, 1998b). The disconnection of childbearing from

Table 4.2   (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in Britain, among the 1958 British birth cohort

	Males	Females
leaving the parental home and first union		
=	50	57
<	39	36
>	11	10
(%)*	(88)	(93)
marriage and leaving parental home		
=	44	51
<	6	8
>	50	42
(%)	(78)	(85)
first union		
=	68	73
<	-	-
>	32	27
(%)	(78)	(85)
first child and first union		
=	8	8
<	2	4
>	90	87
(%)	(66)	(76)
first marriage		
=	11	10
<	5	7
>	84	83
(%)	(63)	(72)

Source: National Child Development Study

=	both events occurred within 6 months of each other
<	first event preceded second by more than 6 months
>	first event followed second after more than 6 months
(%)	total percentage of persons having experienced both events

marriage among younger cohorts is also highlighted by the greater delay in entry into marriage than for entry into parenthood (Figure 4.1).

In summary, the past few decades have witnessed dramatic changes in patterns of partnership formation and fertility. During the 1960s sexual activity became disconnected from marriage, during the 1970s entry into first partnership became disconnected from first marriage, and during the 1980s marriage

became no longer a necessary precursor to entry into parenthood. These trends are part of the diversification and individualisation of the life course that has occurred in many developed countries. Macro explanations for these trends include the increased educational attainment and labour force participation of women, which tend to increase opportunity costs of family formation (Becker, 1981), the relative decline in young male earnings (Oppenheimer, 1994), increased secularisation and individuation (Van de Kaa, 1987; Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 1988), and the increased availability of effective contraception, which allows individuals and couples to delay entry into marriage and parenthood without delaying entry into sexual activity (Preston, 1986; Lewis and Kiernan, 1996).

In order to test some of these hypotheses at the individual level we use data which are available for one specific cohort to investigate the effects of education and religiosity (among other factors) on the timing of transitions to adulthood.

4.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

Table 4.3 contains the parameter estimates from piecewise-constant hazards models for departure from the parental home, entry into first partnership, marriage and parenthood.

4.4.1 Impact of education

As discussed in Chapter 1, it is generally hypothesised that enrolment in education is incompatible with family formation, especially marriage and childrearing. There remains a cultural norm in Britain for family formation to be delayed until the end of educational studies and it is thus not surprising that we find the coefficients for current enrolment to be negative for first partnership formation, first marriage and entry into parenthood. As was suggested in Chapter 1, the effect of enrolment is weakest for entry into first partnership and strongest for entry into parenthood. For example, among men the relative risk of entering a first (married or unmarried) partnership whilst remaining in full-time education is ($exp^{-0.362}$ =) 0.70 times that for those who have left full-time education, whilst the relative risk of becoming a parent for male students is only one fifth (0.18) that for those who have left education.

Based upon the assumption of a traditional sexual division of labour (Becker, 1981) it is to be expected that the delaying effect of educational enrolment on partnership formation and childbearing would be greater for women than for

men. The parameter estimates shown in Table 4.3 suggest that this is indeed the case in Britain. For example, women who have left full- time education are 9.3 times more likely to become a parent than those who remain studying, compared to a relative risk of 5.6 for men.

The effect of current educational enrolment on leaving the parental home is rather more complex and varies with current age. Among the 1958 British cohort, only a minority of more privileged young adults continued on to post-18 education. As we have seen in Figure 4.1, the move away from the parental home to attend university generally takes place at age 18. Hence it is not surprising that we find a strong positive association between current educational enrolment at ages 17-18 and leaving the parental home. For example, male students aged 17-18 are twice as likely (exp(0.122+0.723)=2.3) to leave home as those who have left education. At older ages current educational enrolment has no impact on the risk of leaving home.

By modelling both educational enrolment and attainment simultaneously we can identify the effect of increased human capital on the rate of transition to adulthood. Among both men and women educational attainment is associated with a delay in leaving home until their early twenties at which point those with higher educational qualifications are more likely to leave home. Increased education is also associated with a delay in entry into first partnership. For men the main effect is insignificant, suggesting that among those aged 21-22 educational attainment has no net impact on the rate of partnership formation. However the interactions between attainment and age show that among teenage men, it is those with lower levels of education who are most likely to form a partnership, whilst among those in their mid-twenties it is those with higher levels of education who are slightly more likely to form a partnership. A similar pattern emerges for women, although the effect is slightly greater in magnitude. Among teenage women increased education is negatively associated with partnership formation, whilst at ages 21 and above each additional year of education is associated with a 1.8 per cent increase $((\exp^{0.018}-1)\times100)$ in the risk of partnership formation.

Table 4.3 *Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates*

	Males							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
educational level (years)		0.055**		-0.004		0.016*		-0.046**
currently enrolled in full-time education (no)		0.122		-0.362**		-1.078**		-1.714**
religious practice (no religious affiliation)								
attends less than once a month		0.091*		-0.087*		0.258**		-0.116
attends at least once a month		-0.039		-0.117		0.185**		-0.316
not known		-0.228		-0.040		0.088		0.181
current age (21-22)								
15-16	-2.319**	-1.988**	-3.976**	-2.742**	-4.185**	-1.898**	-3.473**	-1.525**
17-18	-1.062**	-1.004**	-1.643**	-1.145**	-1.837**	-1.121**	-1.703**	-1.400**
19-20	-0.559**	-0.286	-0.456**	-0.182	-0.570**	-0.036	-0.666**	-0.378**
23-24	0.090	0.099	0.097	0.026	0.123*	0.064	0.274**	0.076
25-26	0.098	0.118	0.072	-0.091	0.011	-0.045	0.313**	0.057
27-28	-0.037	0.005	-0.104	-0.263*	-0.031	-0.083	0.452**	0.186
29-30	-0.112	0.067	0.016	-0.348*	-0.138	-0.186*	0.581**	0.440**
region of residence (Scotland and the north)								
Wales and the midlands	-0.046	-0.019	0.011	0.006	-0.005	-0.001	-0.050	-0.076
southern and eastern England	0.024	0.045	-0.028	-0.035	-0.038	-0.035	-0.096	-0.126*
London and the south east	-0.168**	-0.144**	-0.115*	-0.113*	-0.232**	-0.218**	-0.212**	-0.218**
Not known	-0.179*	-0.161*	-0.129	-0.139*	-0.074	-0.085	-0.131	-0.171*
mother's age at leaving school (before age 15)								
15+ years	0.159**	0.105**	-0.119**	-0.107**	-0.154**	-0.127**	-0.162**	-0.094
not known	0.122*	0.115*	-0.060	-0.051	-0.139*	-0.119*	-0.070	-0.042

Table 4.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates (cont.)

	Males							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
father's social class (semi-skilled, unskilled)								
professional, managerial, intermediate	-0.022	-0.118	-0.386**	-0.267**	-0.552**	-0.387***	-1.001**	-0.671**
junior non-manual	-0.257	-0.322*	-0.227*	-0.150	-0.064	-0.028	-0.542**	-0.414**
skilled manual	0.015	-0.017	-0.040	-0.028	-0.006	0.015	-0.126*	-0.072
not known	0.049	0.014	-0.114*	-0.095	-0.146*	-0.123*	-0.227*	-0.174*
mother's age at her first birth (under 20)								
20-24 years	-0.104*	-0.131**	-0.052	-0.049	-0.101*	-0.098	-0.317**	-0.266**
25+ years	-0.191**	-0.257**	-0.311**	-0.307**	-0.378**	-0.377**	-0.527**	-0.446**
not known	-0.025	-0.066	-0.063	-0.031	-0.056	-0.048	-0.143	-0.081
parents separated (no)								
yes	0.130*	0.154**	0.212**	0.201**				
not known	0.177	0.188	0.347*	0.334*				
education level age 15-16		-0.147*		-0.418**		-0.564		-0.216
education level age 17-18		-0.079**		-0.101**		-0.124**		-0.033
education level age 19-20		-0.050**		-0.053**		-0.099**		-0.100**
education level age 23-24				0.013				
education level age 25-26				0.033				
education level age 27-28				0.033				
education level age 29-30				-0.078**				
currently enrolled in education age 17-18	0.723**							
currently enrolled in education age 19-20	0.859**							

Table 4.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates (cont.)

	Males							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
attends church less than once a month age 15-16		-0.038		-0.772		-1.475		0.333**
attends church less than once a month age 17-18		-0.326***		-0.381*		-0.513*		0.404**
attends church less than once a month age 19-20		-0.267***		-0.254***		-0.419**		0.421**
attends church less than once a month age 23-24								0.278*
attends church less than once a month age 25-26								0.271
attends church less than once a month age 27-28								0.684***
attends church less than once a month age 29-30								0.816***
attends church once a month or more age 23-24								0.031
attends church once a month or more age 25-26								
attends church once a month or more age 27-28								
attends church once a month or more age 29-30								
father professional/managerial 15-16	0.082	0.234						
father professional/managerial 17-18	0.703**	0.568***						
father professional/managerial 19-20	0.314*	0.240						
father professional/managerial 23-24	0.227	0.237	0.433**	0.307**	0.494**	0.295*	0.353	0.137
father professional/managerial 25-26	-0.102	-0.101	0.357**	0.183	0.515***	0.310*	0.902**	0.664**
father professional/managerial 27-28	0.475*	0.477*	0.760***	0.584***	0.844***	0.638***	1.032***	0.787***
father professional/managerial 29-30	-0.092	-0.090	0.362*	0.086	0.834***	0.629**	1.402***	0.834***
father junior non-manual age 15-16	0.484	0.582*						
father junior non-manual age 17-18	0.885**	0.835***						
father junior non-manual age 19-20	0.155	0.137						
father junior non-manual age 23-24	0.368	0.378	0.329*	0.256				
father junior non-manual age 25-26	0.469*	0.476**	0.130	0.033				
father junior non-manual age 27-28	0.944**	0.949***	0.586**	0.487*			0.551**	0.483**
father junior non-manual age 29-30	0.879**	0.909***	0.178	0.023			0.633**	0.578**

Table 4.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates (cont.)

	Males							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
mother's first birth 20-24 age 15-16			-0.669	-0.525	-2.046	-1.856		
mother's first birth 20-24 age 17-18			-0.402*	-0.314	-0.513*	-0.387		
mother's first birth 20-24 age 19-20			-0.228*	-0.192				
mother's first birth 20-24 age 25-26							0.198	0.188
mother's first birth 20-24 age 27-28							0.248*	0.242*
mother's first birth 20-24 age 29-30							0.215	0.201
mother's first birth 25+ 15-16			-0.697	-0.419	-1.386	-1.035	-1.171	-1.102
mother's first birth 25+ 17-18			-0.675**	-0.495*	-0.784**	-0.500	-0.539	-0.334
mother's first birth 25+ 19-20			-0.381**	-0.291*	-0.493**	-0.388**	-0.869**	-0.726**
parental separation age 15-16	0.593**	0.541**	1.113*	1.044*				
intercept	-4.105**	-4.310**	-4.070	-4.082**	-4.282*	-5.534**	4.867**	-6.382**
log likelihood	-11857.42	-11748.99	-12762.29	-12707.87	-12009.70	-11909.36	-10083.16	-9980.19

Table 4.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
educational level (years)		0.045**		0.018*		0.021**		-0.066**
currently enrolled in full-time education (no)		-0.142		-0.721**		-1.211**		-2.231**
religious practice (no religious affiliation)								
attends less than once a month		0.074		-0.049		0.158**		0.070
attends at least once a month		-0.125*		-0.176**		0.078		0.132*
not known		-0.251		-0.070		0.132		0.007
current age (21-22)								
15-16	-2.776**	-1.824**	-2.818**	-1.158**	-2.615**	-0.769**	-2.207**	0.441
17-18	-0.673**	-0.506**	-0.963**	-0.330**	-0.520**	-0.165	-0.755**	-0.421**
19-20	-0.224**	0.049	-0.193**	0.001	0.071	0.262**	-0.390**	-0.023
23-24	-0.127**	-0.135*	-0.073	-0.171**	-0.078	-0.218**	-0.159	-0.140
25-26	-0.365**	-0.364**	-0.331**	-0.428**	-0.282**	-0.422**	-0.104	-0.074
27-28	-0.397**	-0.387**	-0.414**	-0.508**	-0.445**	-0.581**	-0.011	0.023
29-30	-0.606**	-0.591**	-0.577**	-0.666**	-0.637**	-0.771**	-0.188	-0.151
region of residence (Scotland and the north)								
Wales and the midlands	0.110*	0.116**	0.064	0.051	0.008	0.008	-0.043	-0.042
southern and eastern England	0.185**	0.179**	0.169**	0.144**	0.087	0.085	0.049	0.040
London and the south east	0.050	0.050	-0.007	-0.009	-0.158**	-0.133**	-0.128*	-0.109
Not known	0.053	0.059	0.041	0.030	0.032	0.036	-0.026	-0.035
mother's age at leaving school (before age 15)								
15+ years	0.099**	0.065	-0.123**	-0.062	-0.129**	-0.103*	-0.212**	-0.106*
not known	0.097*	0.081	-0.056	-0.017	-0.136**	-0.087	-0.131*	-0.065

Table 4.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
father's social class (semi-skilled, unskilled)								
professional, managerial, intermediate	0.193**	0.104	-0.100	-0.075	-0.178**	-0.112	-0.859**	-0.427**
junior non-manual	0.096	0.020	-0.119	-0.042	-0.015	0.023	-0.622**	-0.383***
skilled manual	-0.067	-0.091	-0.135***	-0.087	-0.134**	-0.098*	-0.131**	-0.059
not known	0.024	-0.012	-0.118*	-0.101*	-0.218**	-0.178***	-0.151*	-0.058
mother's age at her first birth (under 20)								
20-24 years	-0.044	-0.057	-0.123**	-0.071	0.075	0.098	-0.481**	-0.376**
25+ years	-0.128**	-0.168**	-0.221**	-0.155***	-0.087	-0.058	-0.842**	-0.657**
not known	-0.086	-0.105	-0.151*	-0.043	-0.211**	-0.124	-0.325**	-0.176*
parents separated (no)								
yes	0.180	0.194**	0.121*	0.093	-0.161*	-0.159*	0.226**	0.173**
not known	0.225	0.209	-0.003	-0.009	-0.030	-0.027	0.064	0.049
education level age 15-16		-0.252**		-0.475***		-0.641**		-0.486**
education level age 17-18		-0.087**		-0.126***		-0.134***		-0.105**
education level age 19-20		-0.042**		-0.064***		-0.082***		-0.139**
currently enrolled in education age 17-18		0.916**						
attends church less than once a month age 15-16		-0.457**		-0.460*				
attends church less than once a month age 17-18		-0.232**		-0.329**				
attends church less than once a month age 19-20		-0.168*						
attends church once a month or more age 15-16				-0.546				
attends church once a month or more age 17-18				-0.396*				

Table 4.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
father professional/managerial 15-16	-0.506*	-0.304	-1.446**	-1.093*	-1.600*	-1.162		
father professional/managerial 17-18			-0.779***	-0.493***	-0.889***	-0.549**		
father professional/managerial 19-20			-0.328**	-0.168	-0.401**	-0.205		
father professional/managerial 23-24							0.237	-0.025
father professional/managerial 25-26							0.435**	0.158
father professional/managerial 27-28							0.638**	0.356*
father professional/managerial 29-30							0.963**	0.678**
father junior non-manual age 15-16			-0.628	-0.329	-1.214	-0.847		
father junior non-manual age 17-18			-0.610**	-0.400*	-0.634**	-0.369		
father junior non-manual age 19-20			-0.220	-0.131	-0.336*	-0.220		
father junior non-manual age 23-24			0.147	0.127				
father junior non-manual age 25-26			0.486**	0.469*			0.489**	0.377*
father junior non-manual age 27-28			0.284	0.273			0.606**	0.502**
father junior non-manual age 29-30			0.409	0.398			0.936**	0.825**
mother left school 15+ 15-16					-0.569*	-0.365	-0.919**	-0.809*
mother left school 15+ 17-18					-0.119	0.014		
mother left school 15+ 19-20					-0.203*	-0.127		
mother's first birth 20-24 age 15-16					-0.349	-0.216		
mother's first birth 20-24 age 17-18					-0.576**	-0.512**		
mother's first birth 20-24 age 19-20					-0.223*	-0.196*		
mother's first birth 20-24 age 23-24							0.538**	0.483**
mother's first birth 20-24 age 25-26							0.562**	0.512**
mother's first birth 20-24 age 27-28							0.427**	0.376**
mother's first birth 20-24 age 29-30							0.462**	0.411*

Table 4.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain: parameter estimates (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
mother's first birth 25+ 15-16			-0.641*	-0.456	-1.149**	-0.838*	-0.163	-0.043
mother's first birth 25+ 17-18			-0.622**	-0.478**	-1.077**	-0.855***	-0.563**	-0.381
mother's first birth 25+ 19-20			-0.181*	-0.117	-0.318***	-0.200	-0.377*	-0.277
mother's first birth 25+ 23-24							0.568**	0.480**
mother's first birth 25+ 25-26							0.624**	0.539***
mother's first birth 25+ 27-28							0.478**	0.392*
mother's first birth 25+ 29-30							0.684***	0.601**
parental separation age 15-16	0.603**	0.511**	0.431*	0.284	0.573	0.395		
parental separation age 17-18			0.371**	0.284**	0.496**	0.386**		
parental separation age 19-20			0.301**	0.257*				
intercept	-3.791**	-3.923**	-3.67**	-3.766**	-4.005***	-5.371**	-4.273**	-6.464***
log likelihood	-11913.60	-11811.64	-13553.76	-13374.48	-13408.86	-13195.86	-12628.17	-12350.99

*p<0.05   **p<0.01

The influence of educational attainment on entry into first marriage follows a similar pattern to entry into first partnership, although the magnitude of the effects is greater. Again, a cross-over in the relationship is seen. For 17-18 year-olds the risk of marriage is reduced by around 10 per cent for each additional year of education, whilst for men and women in their twenties each additional year of education is associated with a 1.6 and 2.1 per cent increase in the risk of marriage, respectively. The relationship between educational attainment and the timing of parenthood is a little different. Once again there is a strong negative effect of educational attainment on the risk of experiencing a birth for teenagers. But even among those in their twenties, each additional year of education is associated with a 4.5 and 6.4 per cent decrease in the risk of becoming a father or mother. For the 1958 cohort at least, it would seem that education acts to delay but not to reduce the overall level of partnership formation among men and women, and to reduce the level of childbearing right through the 20-29 age range. Our findings are consistent with the notion that the opportunity costs of partnership formation for highly educated young people are greatest at the start of their careers, and that the opportunity costs of family formation are greater for women than for men.

4.4.2   Impact of religion

Many authors have noted that economic factors cannot be viewed in isolation from the changes in cultural and social factors which have occurred in post-war developed countries. According to Van de Kaa, the changes associated with the "second demographic transition" relate to a shift from conservative to progressive societies. "... the progressive point of view stresses the equality of opportunities (income, education, etc.) and freedom of choice in behaviour (dress, sexual behaviour, etc.)" (Van de Kaa, 1987, p7).

Lesthaeghe and Surkyn (1988) argue that secularisation and the growth of individualism have encouraged attitudes relating to individual autonomy and self-fulfilment, and a decline in religious observance. In our analyses we use religious activity as reported at age 23 to investigate whether religiosity is associated with earlier family formation, particularly marriage and childbearing. Only around 10 per cent of the 1958 British cohort reported that they attended church (or religious meetings) at least once a month. A further 50 per cent said that they belonged to a religion but that they attended church less than once a month, whilst the remaining 40 per cent reported no religious denomination.

In their teens, men and women with higher levels of religiosity are less likely to leave home. In their twenties, women who attend church once a month are

significantly less likely to leave, but no difference is found for men. Of particular interest is the difference in the relationship found between religiosity and entry into first marriage as opposed to first partnership. Among teenage women those with intermediate levels of religiosity are less likely to enter a first partnership, but are more likely to marry. Among women in their twenties, those with intermediate levels of religiosity are no different from those with no religious affiliation in their rates of entry into first partnership, but are significantly more likely to marry. Among men in their twenties those who attend church at least once a month are estimated to be 0.89 times as likely to enter a first partnership, but 1.2 times more likely to marry as compared with those with no religious affiliation. This suggests that increased religiosity is associated with a preference for marriage rather than non-marital cohabitation, a trend found previously for this cohort by Berrington and Diamond (1998). These findings support the hypothesis put forward in Chapter 1 suggesting that religion has a positive effect on marriage but a negative effect on the likelihood of unmarried cohabitation. However, there is inconsistent support for the notion that the effect of religiosity differs between men and women (H_{5b}).

4.4.3   Parental and early life course factors

The age at which transitions to adulthood (particularly partnership formation and entry into parenthood) are made is strongly related to an individual's *class background*. Young adults from professional or intermediate social class backgrounds have a faster rate of leaving the parental home at all ages (apart for women aged 15-16) as compared to their contemporaries from manual social class backgrounds. Men from junior non-manual backgrounds have lower rates of leaving home at ages 20-23, as compared with those from manual social class backgrounds, but significantly higher rates at either younger or older ages.

Family formation is clearly delayed for those from more advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. The effects of father's social class and maternal education become attenuated in Model 2, suggesting that socio-economic background factors work in part through the respondent's own educational experience to influence the timing of family formation. However, father's social class generally remains significant. Women from professional and intermediate non-manual class backgrounds were less likely to form a partnership in their teens, although no differences are seen once they reach their twenties. Men from the richest class backgrounds were significantly less likely to form a partnership in their teens and early twenties, being more likely to defer partnership formation into their late twenties. The effect of parental

social class on the timing of entry into marriage is similar to that for entry into first partnership, except that the coefficients are larger in magnitude. In particular we note the large positive coefficients for the interaction between professional/intermediate social class backgrounds and ages 27-30. These suggest that men from professional and intermediate backgrounds are particularly likely to marry in their late twenties as compared with never married men from the poorest social backgrounds. As noted by Berrington and Diamond (1998), this is likely to result from a selection effect whereby men from poorer social class backgrounds who remain unmarried in their late twenties are likely to have socio-economic, psychological, or health characteristics which render them less attractive marriage partners.

Class differences in the timing of entry into parenthood are particularly large. For example, during their teens and early twenties the likelihood of giving birth among women whose fathers were in professional or intermediate occupations was only two-thirds that of daughters from semi- and unskilled social class backgrounds. However, among women who remained nulliparous in their late twenties, those from professional and intermediate class backgrounds were 1.3 times more likely to have a birth. In summary, among the 1958 cohort at least there remained strong class-specific differences in the timing of partnership formation (especially marriage) and childbearing. Previous authors have interpreted such differences as class-specific norms as to the "correct age for marriage" (Kiernan and Eldridge, 1987).

Parental demographic characteristics are found to influence the timing of demographic events in young adulthood net of socio-economic background factors. As found previously in Britain (Kiernan and Diamond, 1983; Kiernan and Eldridge, 1987), we see a strong inter-generational association in the timing of family formation. Men and women *whose mothers delayed childbearing* into their late twenties are significantly less likely to form a partnership or to become a parent in their teens. As found previously using data from the NCDS (Kiernan, 1992), the NSSAL (Kiernan and Hobcraft, 1997), and the BHPS (Murphy and Wang, 1998), the propensity to leave the parental home is greater for those from *non-intact family backgrounds*. The interaction given at the bottom of Table 4.3 suggests that the rate of leaving home whilst aged 15-16 is small, but significantly higher for those whose parents separated prior to age 33. Earlier analyses of the 1958 cohort by Kiernan (1992) suggested that those who experienced parental separation, particularly those who subsequently lived in a step family, were more likely to leave home for negative reasons such as "friction". Our analyses also suggest that parental separation is associated with entry into first partnership before age 18, and teenage marriage among women. Among single men and women

in their mid to late twenties parental separation is associated with higher rates of entry into first partnership, but not with increased rates of marriage, reflecting the tendency of those who have experienced parental separation to cohabit rather than to marry (Cherlin et al., 1995; Berrington and Diamond, 1998).

Finally, we find a persistent tendency for men and women who were living at age 16 in London and the South-East to have lower rates of marriage and entry into parenthood. We notice that the parameter estimates relating to entry into first partnership are not as negative as for entry into marriage, suggesting that non-marital cohabitation is more common among young adults living in this *region*. This pattern was also observed previously from cross-sectional data (Haskey and Kiernan, 1989).

4.5 | Discussion and conclusions

Apart from age at first intercourse, transitions to adulthood have become less age related. That is to say, the age range over which the transition takes place has increased between the cohorts of the early 1950s and late 1960s. In considering this trend we should note, however, that the relative uniformity in patterns and timing of transition to adulthood witnessed during the 1960s was itself unusual. The current protracted nature of leaving home and the fact that it no longer necessarily signifies entry into marriage and family formation, is more similar to that seen in historical Europe (although the processes underlying these patterns may have changed substantially). Anderson highlights the greater age-gradedness and predictability of family life in the years following the Second World War: "A young person aged, say 14, looking forward in the 1960s could, within a reasonable probability of being right, predict within a very few years the timing of his or her future life course. None of this would have been possible in the nineteenth century; much would still have been difficult before 1945. Possibly we are again returning to a situation of much greater diversity of experience." (Anderson, 1983, p. 13).

During the 1980s the average age at leaving home in Britain changed rather little, but the destinations upon leaving have altered significantly across cohorts. Young adults are increasingly living away from the parental home outside a family context, either living alone or flat sharing with other unrelated adults. This experience of non-family living may have implications for the subsequent family formation trajectories taken by young adults, for example, encouraging a delay in marriage and a preference for non-marital cohabitation (Goldscheider and Waite, 1987; Axinn and Barber, 1997; Berrington and

Diamond, 1998). Among the 1958 cohort the age pattern of home leaving for those most highly educated is quite distinct, with very high rates of leaving home at age 18 to attend higher education. With around one third of young adults now entering higher education, this pattern of leaving home has increased markedly. At the same time however, the reduction in financial support for students (for example, the withdrawal of maintenance grants, introduction of student loans and £1000 annual fees) has encouraged an increasing proportion of students - currently one in five - to remain living with their parents whilst attending higher education (UCAS, 1998).

As in other developed countries the age at which young adults in Britain experience first heterosexual intercourse has declined. The decrease began for cohorts born between 1946 and 1955 and has slowed somewhat in recent cohorts, although there has been significant change among women born in the late 1960s - their experience more closely resembles that for men. It seems that sexual intercourse has become increasingly disconnected from entry into first partnership, marriage or parenthood. Many of the other demographic transitions seen as milestones to adulthood are being delayed to later ages, although it is clear that some transitions, marriage for example, have been affected more than other transitions such as leaving home. It is unclear whether today's young adults will forego marriage altogether or whether marriage rates will increase at later ages. Many of them will make the transition to parenthood without marriage.

We have seen large intra-cohort variations in the timing of demographic transitions in young adulthood. More privileged socio-economic backgrounds are associated with an earlier age at leaving the parental home, but a delay in entry into first partnership, marriage and parenthood. The tendency of those with lower levels of education and hence poorer employment prospects to enter family formation at an earlier age seems to be at odds with the expectations of the 'youth research' for increased youth unemployment during the 1980s to be associated with a delay in marriage and family formation. According to Irwin we must look at the relationship between the timing of demographic events and the *lifetime* resource and income profiles of couples. "Rising earnings over (male) middle-class careers suggest that later ages at parenthood can better accommodate the probable, if temporary, loss of mothers' earnings and the costs of children, relative to lifestyle aspirations. Job insecurity and a shallow earnings gradient over working-class employment trajectories,..., are seen to encourage younger ages at family formation since there is little to be gained by delay" (Irwin, 1995 p. 118).

We have identified separate effects of educational enrolment and educational attainment on the timing of leaving home, partnership formation and entry into parenthood. Current educational enrolment is associated with earlier departure from the parental home to take up further studies. Educational enrolment delays entry into first partnership, but the effect is much stronger for marriage than for consensual unions. Thornton et al. (1995) argue that marital and non-marital cohabitation are generally seen as adult roles not compatible with being a student, but that since non-marital cohabitation requires less commitment to the relationship and to children, the opportunity costs of this type of cohabitation may be less than for marriage. Students may, therefore, be more willing to cohabit rather than marry.

Once educational enrolment is controlled, increased educational attainment was associated with a delay in leaving the parental home, partnership formation and entry into marriage, especially for women. However, among those who remained single in their early twenties a weak positive relationship between attainment and entry into marriage is seen. It would seem then, that increased education and hence increased labour market potential among women is associated with a delay in marriage rather than with increased non-marriage. Similar findings have been observed for the United States (Oppenheimer, 1994) and other European countries (Blossfeld, 1995). As Oppenheimer notes; "Economic factors, school enrolment, service in the military, getting established in a career, and so on, may all signify the necessity or desirability of delaying marriage, without affecting the desirability of marriage *per se.*" (Oppenheimer, 1994, p. 304). Blossfeld concludes that "the major delaying effect of educational expansion on the timing of first marriage is connected with educational enrolment and is therefore limited to the transition from youth to adulthood" (Blossfeld, 1995 p. 23). However, among the 1958 cohort higher educational attainment was associated with a delay in entry into parenthood right through age 30 for both men and women. The effect is stronger for women, which may reflect their greater opportunity costs of having children at the start of their careers.

It is not only economic factors, which affect the timing and type of transitions made in young adulthood. Our analyses suggest that higher levels of religiosity are associated with a tendency to marry rather than cohabit. Parental demographic characteristics are also found to exert independent effects on the timing of transitions net of socio-economic factors. Further studies are required to explore whether inter-generational associations in the timing of family formation reflect attitudes gained through socialisation concerning the correct age at which marriage and childbearing should begin (Axinn and Thornton, 1993). Those who experienced parental separation were more likely

to leave home and to marry at an early age (15-16 years). Parental separation also appears to be associated with entry into a non-marital first partnership rather than marriage, and among women with earlier entry into parenthood. Such relationships have been observed previously both in Britain (Kiernan and Diamond, 1983; Kiernan, 1992; Kiernan and Hobcraft, 1997) and the United States (see for example, McLanahan and Bumpass, 1988; Thornton, 1991). There is currently a debate in Britain as to whether such statistical associations denote causal relationships, and the possible nature of any underlying mechanisms (Ní Bhrolcháin et al., 1994).

The 1958 British cohort were making their transitions to adulthood during the late 1970s and early 1980s, and hence did not experience the worst of the economic recession and subsequent economic insecurities facing today's young adults. More research is required on more recent cohorts, among whom the transition to adulthood is likely to be more protracted and diverse. Future data from the 1970 birth cohort, currently being followed up within the 1970 British Cohort Study (Bynner et al., 1997), should provide a unique opportunity to conduct inter-cohort comparisons of the nature and determinants of the transition to adulthood in Britain.

4.6 | References

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Figure 4.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Britain, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort*

Departure from the parental home according to destination among the 1958 British cohort

Men

Source: NCDS   ⊠ student ⊞ friends ☐ partner ▨ alone

Women
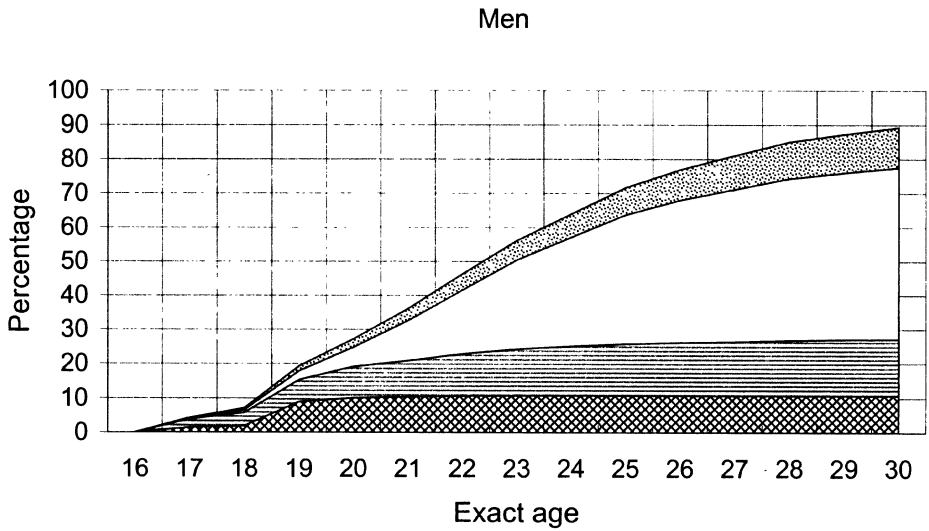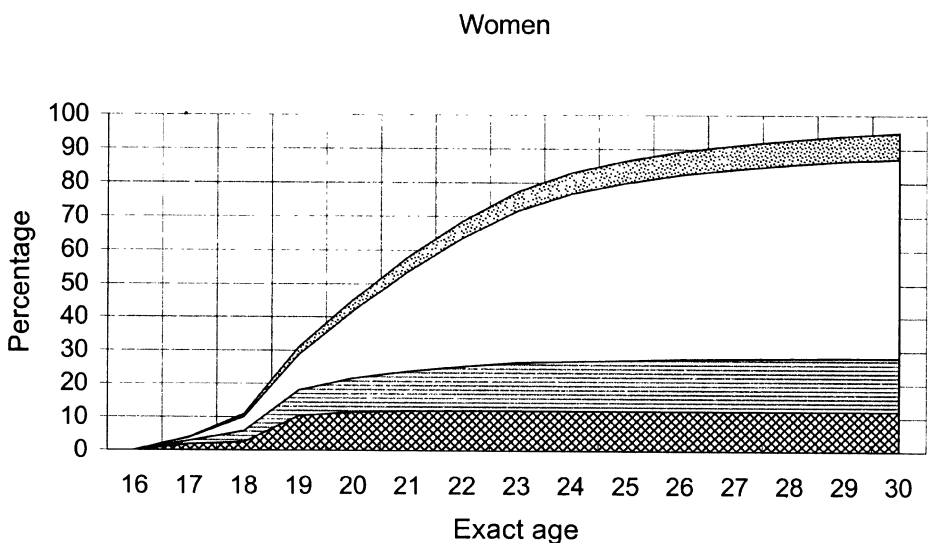
Source: NCDS   ⊠ student ⊞ friends ☐ partner ▨ alone

Figure 4.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Britain, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

Entry into first parnership

Men

Source: NSSAL   —— 1951-55   --·-- 1956-60   ······ 1961-65   ▪ ▪ 1966-70

Women
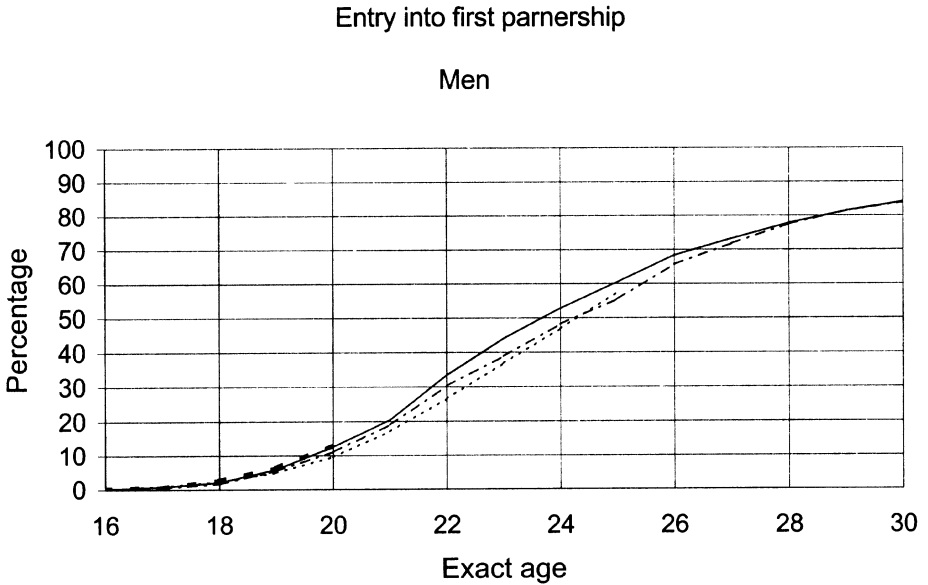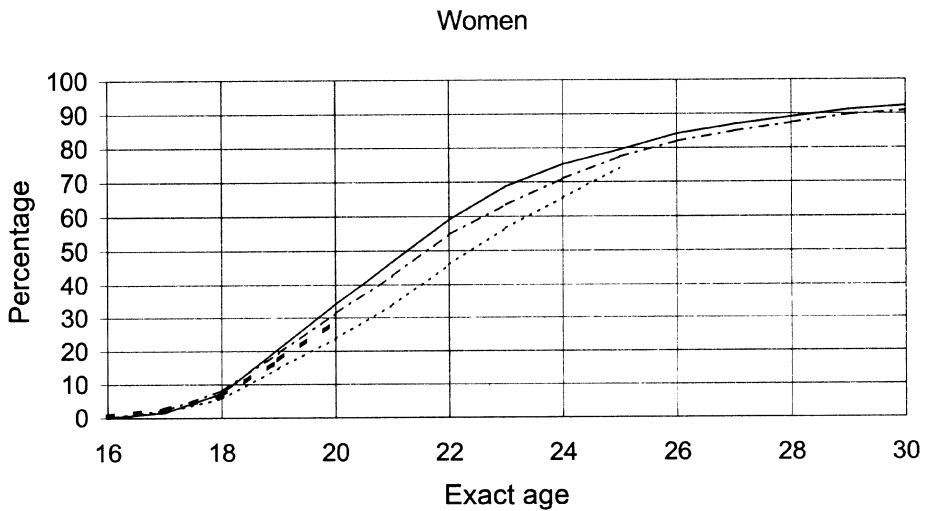
Source: NSSAL   —— 1951-55   --·-- 1956-60   ······ 1961-65   ▪ ▪ 1966-70

Figure 4.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Britain, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

Entry into first marriage

Men

Source: OPCS/ONS   —— 1953 ---- 1958 ······ 1963 ▪ ▪ 1968

Women
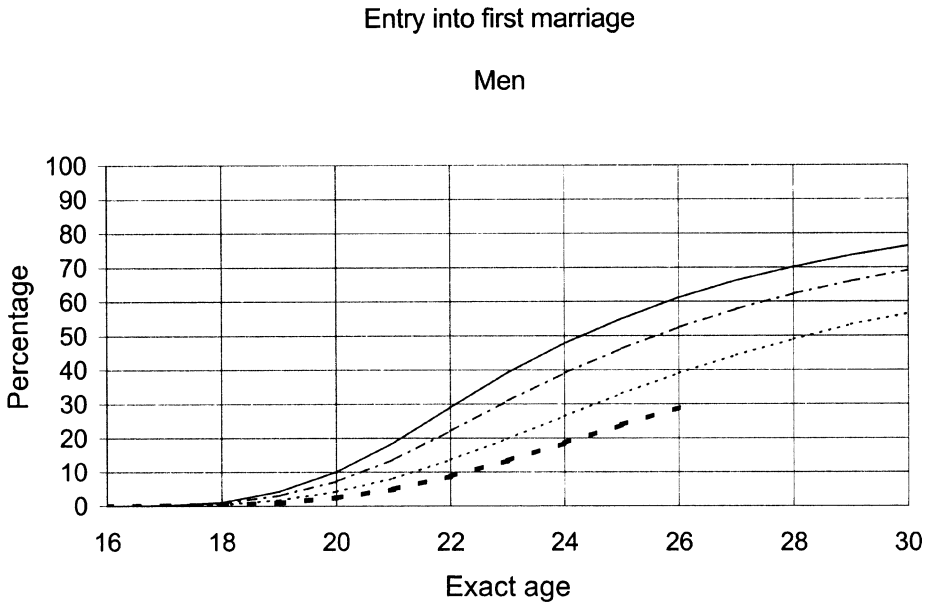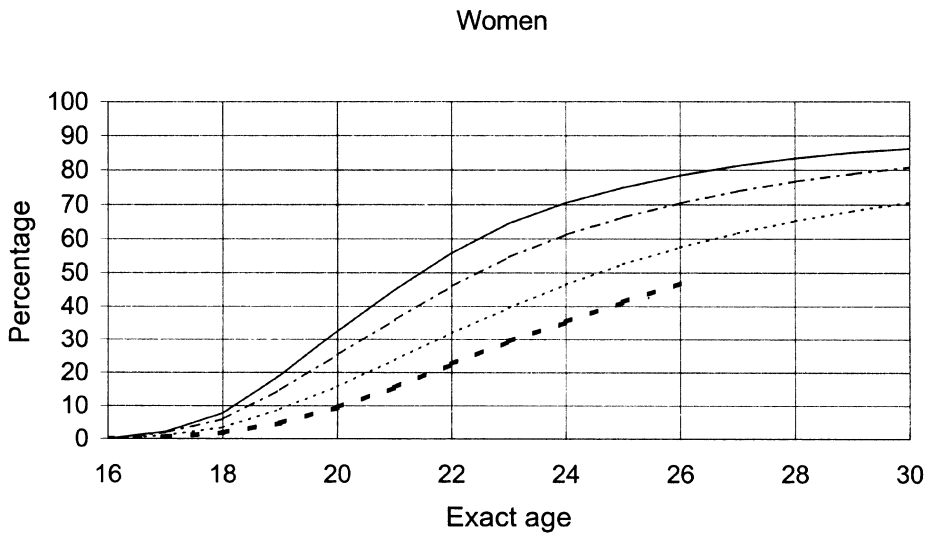
Source: OPCS/ONS   —— 1953 ---- 1958 ······ 1963 ▪ ▪ 1968

*Figure 4.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood in Britain, inverted
survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

Entry into first parenthood

Men

Source: NSSAL   —— 1951-55 ---- 1956-60 ······ 1961-65 ▪ ▪ 1966-70

Women
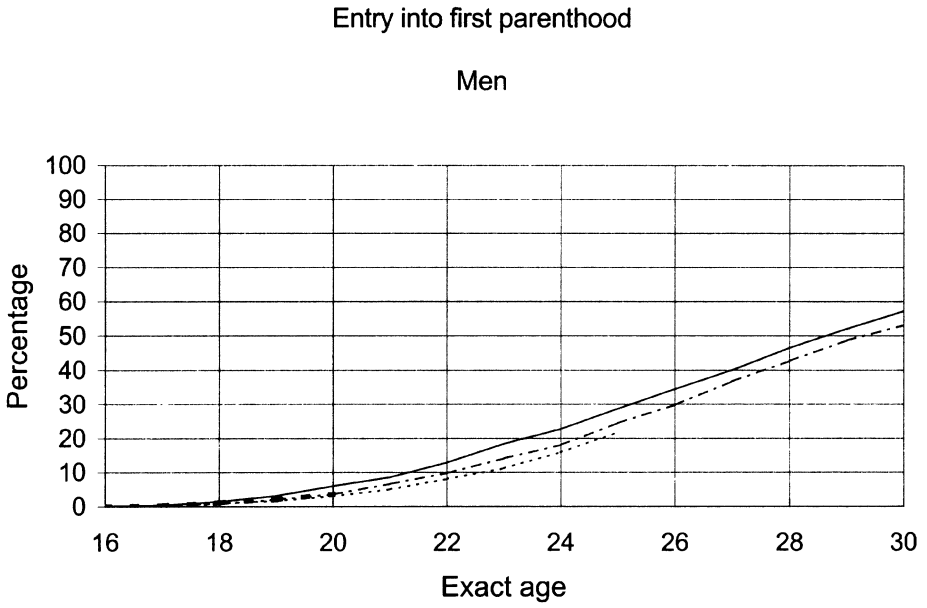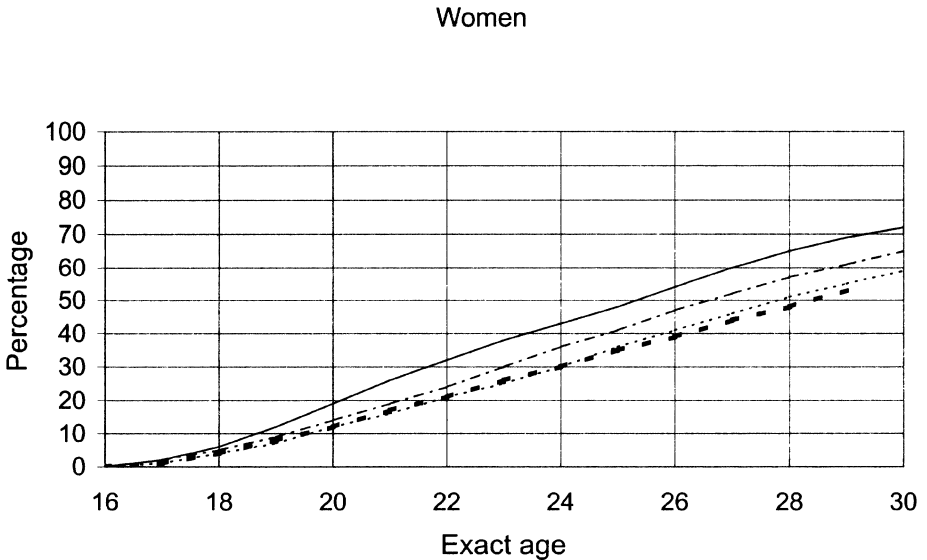
Source: OPCS/ONS   —— 1953 ---- 1958 ······ 1963 ▪ ▪ 1968

5. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN FLANDERS (BELGIUM)

MARTINE CORIJN

5.1 | Introduction

In terms of household types - based on indicators of the level of fertility, divorce, non-marital cohabitation and extramarital fertility - Belgium is in the literature often grouped together with countries such as Austria, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland in the Centre Group, whereas France, Norway, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are grouped in the West Group (Kuijsten, 1995). Sardon (1992) remarks that over the last decades women in Belgium marry at a much younger age than in the other Western European countries, and that their age at first marriage is very close to those observed in the Eastern European countries. So, although on the Atlantic side of Europe, Belgium does not seem to be very Western from a demographic perspective.

Within Belgium - counting just over 10 million inhabitants - there are strong regional differences in demographic behaviour, e.g. in the prevalence of unmarried cohabitation (Corijn, 1999; De Boosere, 1995; Mérenne et al., 1997). The availability of data on those regional differences is, however, restricted and/or incomplete.

Studies on the transition to adulthood were for a long time confined to studies on the marriage and first parenthood timing. This is not surprising in a country where leaving the parental home and marriage were and still are events that mostly happen at the same day. Some research has nonetheless been done on the sexual behaviour of adolescents (Geeraert, 1977, 1987). In

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a follow-up study in 1990 of Geeraert's original study, the focus was more on the departure from the parental home, as those adolescents had then become young adults aged 22-26 (Corijn & Deven, 1991).

In the 1990s the topic of the start of the family formation process was broadened to that of the transition to adulthood. An attempt was made to analyse the more general development of individualisation in the timing of several events constituting the transition to adulthood, and to describe the diversity in living arrangements (Corijn, 1993; Corijn, 1996). In this chapter the results on the transition to adulthood are analysed according to the outline presented in Chapter 1.

5.2 | Data and methods

In 1991 the CBGS (Population and Family Study Centre) organised for the fifth time the *Nationale Enquête Gezinsontwikkeling* (National Survey on Family Development, NEGO V) (Cliquet et al., 1991; Lodewijckx, 1999). The CBGS being a scientific institute of the Flemish Government, the 1991 survey dealt geographically only with the Flemish Region of Belgium. The survey comprised a sample of 1879 men and a sample of 2897 women, born between 1951 and 1970 and all of Belgian nationality. The two samples were taken from the population registers and consisted of 61 towns for the males and 90 towns for the females. These towns were a random sample of all Flemish towns stratified by a socio-economic grouping. Given the importance of Antwerp and Ghent, these two big cities were added a priori to the sample. Details on the initial and final samples can be found in Callens (1995b). The response rate for the survey was 69 per cent; 20 per cent refused; 10 per cent could not participate; 1 per cent was never reached. In 1992 the CBGS was asked by the Brussels Government to organise an analogous FFS in the Brussels Region with several samples, some of non-Belgian nationality. A description of the sampling process and sample characteristics can be found in Daelemans and Callens (1994). A sample of 320 men and one of 339 women were Flemish speaking respondents of Belgian nationality, born between 1951 and 1970. Their response rate was 54 per cent; 20 per cent refused and 26 per cent could not participate or could not be reached. As forerunners of novel behaviour often live in an urban region, particularly in a capital, the samples of the Flemish speaking respondents in the Brussels Region have been added to the samples of the survey in Flanders (weight factors, respectively, .13 and .20). The combined weighed samples are further referred to as the FFS sample in Flanders and concern 1921 men and 2965 women. The surveys, carried out by the CBGS, were

conducted by means of personal interviews based on paper questionnaires at the home of the respondents. The interviewers were trained by CBGS staff. No FFS was carried out in the French speaking Walloon Region.

In this study a selection of events constituting the transition to adulthood is investigated. The *departure from the parental home* is increasingly becoming a gradual process (Goldscheider et al., 1993). This is also the case in Flanders. Many students live during their enrolment in higher education as little as possible in rooms and as much as possible at the parental home, the opposite being true for only some of them. Although both groups are generally officially registered as residing at the parental home, their perception can be quite different. Leaving the parental home is defined in this study as the first departure from the parental home from age 16 onwards, for a period of at least three months and with the feeling of not living any longer in the parental home as subjective criterion. For the start of the *first union* (married or unmarried cohabitation with a partner away from the parents) the delineation is analogous. The timing of the *first marriage* concerns the date of the first civil marriage. In the FFS the whole fertility history was reconstructed. As not fertility per se but the role transition to parenthood is the central issue in this study, the timing of the *first child born alive* is selected. In the Flemish FFS data collection the *educational and employment careers* were - somewhat unjustly - considered as consecutive. However, combining education and employment is indeed very rare in Flanders. The date of finishing full-time school attendance was therefore registered first, with the activity history recorded from that time onwards. Only periods of occupational (in)activity that lasted for more than three months were recorded. A distinction was made between a full-time and a part-time job. Re-entering the educational system was coded as 'other activity'.

Concerning the kind of *religion* and the *frequency of church attendance*, the Belgian FFS contains data for the respondents at the time of the interview and for their parents at the time the respondent was under age 16. These characteristics at the time of the interview constitute variables of limited relevance for the (already experienced) events in the transition to adulthood. After all, particularly the frequency of church attendance often changes precisely as a result of the departure from the parental home, marriage or the presence of children. These characteristics of the parents however constitute a good indicator of the religious background, with its inherent value patterns, in which the respondent grew up and from which he/she started the transition to adulthood. As data on the religion of both parents were available, a new variable was created, as follows. If both parents are Roman Catholics with regular church attendance, there is a strongly religious back-

ground. If at least one parent is Roman Catholic with irregular church atten-
dance, there is a moderately religious background. If at least one parent is
non-Catholic, there is a non-religious background. The rest category in-
cluded the non-practising Catholics. As parents with a religion other than
Roman Catholic were very rare, they were added to this latter group. About
70 per cent of the FFS respondents call themselves Catholics, and about 90
per cent was raised in a Catholic family.

The highest level of education attained of both the father and the mother of
the respondent was used to create a new variable reflecting *social class*.
Three groups were discerned: lower class (both parents only primary
school), higher class (one parent at least higher education) and middle class
(all others). A *divorce of the parents* - at whatever age of the respondent -
was another background variable included.

Information on the highest *level* of education attained by the respondent at
the time of the interview was also available. Here a distinction is made be-
tween a low (primary school or only lower part of high school, ISCED 0-2),
a moderate (full high school, ISCED 3) and a high (higher education outside
or at a university, ISCED 4-6) educational level. This distinction divides the
sample into three groups of comparable size. The resulting variable is
transformed into years spent in education and is made time-varying in the
analyses.

To describe the timing of the transition to adulthood, survival curves and
quartile measures were used, as not all respondents had already experienced
the events under study. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the determinants of the
timing of the events were examined using hazard analysis. We used a
piecewise-constant exponential hazard model to estimate the effect of co-
variates on the hazard of experiencing each transition between age 14 and
40. This duration is split up into twelve intervals of two years each. The
main independent variables in this study are the educational attainment, the
educational / occupational career and the religious background. The impact
of these variables is controlled by the impact of some variables in the pa-
rental home. For the main variables the age-specificity was checked. Model
1 in table 5.3 includes only the main effects of all variables. Model 2 in-
cludes all main effects and the significant interactions of the three main
factors with age.

5.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

5.3.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood

The 'average' transition to adulthood for the post-war cohorts in Flanders can be best presented by the median ages at events such as leaving the parental home, the start of the first union, the first marriage and the birth of the first child. The timing of the transition to adulthood is very much gender- and cohort-specific, as Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1 (in appendix) show.

Gender differences in the timing of the transition to adulthood are most obvious in the start of the family formation career: women start this process about two years earlier than men. Gender differences are less obvious in the timing of the transition from education to occupation.

Across the post-war cohorts all events under study were strongly postponed. This postponement seems to have - as mentioned in hypothesis 1c - in Flanders a ceiling. At age 25 almost all young adults have finished education and started a first job, whereas at age 30 almost all young adults have started their own family of procreation. Only among men is there a considerable proportion postponing marriage and parenthood beyond age 30.

5.3.2   (Dis)connection from age

The degree of (de)standardisation of the transition to adulthood is shown by the extent of (dis)connection of an event *from a particular age*. The inter-quartile range (Q3-Q1) is an appropriate measure of this degree. The smallest inter-quartile range, i.e. the strongest age-gradation, is found among the oldest cohort for the family formation events. This range is somewhat larger among men than among women. This confirms an old dictum, namely, that the timing for women is somewhat more supervised. For all events of the start of the family career, the inter-quartile range increased considerably across cohorts. Along with this increase the larger range for men remained. The timing of completing education has been delayed across these post-war cohorts, but the inter-quartile range remained about four years. Also the timing of the entry into the labour market shifted to a later age across cohorts, but the inter-quartile range was reduced by almost one year. Thus the postponement of the family formation process coincides - as predicted - with a weakening age-relatedness, i.e. an increasing individualisation and destandardisation of the timing of the start of the family career. In contrast, the postponement of the end of the educational enrolment and the start of the occupational career coincide with a stronger age-relatedness. The educa-

Table 5.1   *Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in Flanders, by gender and cohort (in years; months)*

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment								
Q1*	16;3	16;9	17;6	18;3	16;2	16;8	17;7	18;5
Q2	18;2	18;6	19;0	20;0	18;0	18;4	19;2	20;4
Q3	21;0	21;2	21;6	22;4	20;0	20;8	21;2	22;2
Q3-Q1	4;9	4;5	4;0	4;1	3;10	4;0	3;7	3;9
% not at age 25	4	4	4	-	1	1	2	-
Entry into labour market								
Q1	16;4	16;11	17;11	18;10	16;7	17;4	18;0	19;0
Q2	18;8	19;0	19;10	20;10	18;5	19;0	20;2	20;10
Q3	21;6	21;10	22;4	23;1	20;10	21;5	22;1	22;5
Q3-Q1	5;2	4;11	4;5	4;3	4;3	4;1	4;1	3;5
% not at age 25	7	8	9	-	7	7	8	-
Leaving the parental home								
Q1	21;2	21;2	21;5	22;6	19;8	19;7	19;10	20;4
Q2	22;8	23;0	23;8	24;4	21;2	21;2	21;8	22;4
Q3	24;8	25;2	26;5	-	22;9	23;4	23;10	24;6
Q3-Q1	3;6	4;0	5;0	-	3;1	3;9	4;0	4;2
% not at age 30	8	9	14	-	3	3	4	-
First union								
Q1	21;5	21;10	22;2	23;6	20;0	20;0	20;4	21;4
Q2	23;0	23;5	24;4	-	21;5	21;8	22;4	23;8
Q3	25;4	26;3	27;6	-	23;2	23;10	24;9	-
Q3-Q1	3;11	4;5	5;4	-	3;2	3;10	4;5	-
% not at age 30	11	12	18	-	6	6	7	-
First marriage								
Q1	21;6	21;11	22;11	24;2	20;1	20;0	20;8	22;1
Q2	23;2	23;10	25;4	-	21;5	21;11	22;10	24;3
Q3	25;10	27;6	30;8	-	23;5	24;6	26;2	-
Q3-Q1	4;4	5;7	7;9	-	3;4	4;6	5;6	-
% not at age 30	13	18	27	-	8	11	13	-
First child birth								
Q1	23;8	24;6	25;8	-	22;0	22;6	23;5	-
Q2	26;6	27;6	28;5	-	24;2	25;4	26;4	-
Q3	31;10	32;4	-	-	27;6	29;0	29;10	-
Q3-Q1	8;2	7;10	-	-	5;6	6;6	6;5	-
% not at age 30	31	35	43	-	17	22	24	-

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Flanders (1991-92), CBGS Brussels.
*Q1, Q2 and Q3 represent the first 3 quartiles (25, 50 and 75 per cent).

tional/occupational transition seems to be a more institutionalised part of the life course, as was suggested in hypothesis 1b.

5.3.3   (Dis)connection from each other

A destandardisation of the transition to adulthood can also imply that the constituent events become more disconnected *from each other*. Leaving the parental home after finishing school and after getting a job in order to live with a partner at the time of marriage followed soon by the birth of a first child has for a long time been the (social) standard. Table 5.2 shows the prevalence of this standard and illustrates to which degree events became disconnected from each other and how sequences were reversed.

The traditional transition is still standard in Flanders. There is no real disconnection of the first departure from the parental home and the start of a first union. In a period of twenty years the average interval between the two events has risen by only four months. The labour market is generally entered (two to three years) before the parental home is left. Only about 10 per cent experience both events at the same time, suggesting that for this group entering the labour market is the reason to leave the parental home. A disconnection of the timing of the departure from the parental home and first marriage grows also very slowly. About 80 per cent still leave the parental home at the time of marriage. As such one cannot conclude that there is a true decoupling of leaving the parental home from marriage. For almost 90 per cent of the Flemish young adults the start of the first cohabitation with a partner coincides with the civil marriage. Changes across cohorts are weak. A very small group (1 per cent) starts cohabiting with the partner more than six months after the civil marriage, i.e. probably at the time of the religious ceremony. As the first union and marriage coincide that much, the position of both events with respect to the timing of the first childbirth is very similar. In Flanders children are mainly born within a marriage. Officially, only 8 per cent of all births in Flanders in 1992 were registered as non-marital births, and of all marital births 9 per cent were within 6 months after marriage (Corijn, 1996; NIS, 1996).

For an appreciable group the first birth and the first marriage coincide within six months, but the size of this group declines across cohorts. Between the first half of the 1970s and 1980s the percentage of pregnant brides decreased from 20 to 8 per cent (Corijn, 1996). As such a disconnection - in the sense of forced marriages - is observable. A very small group (less than 3 per cent) marries more than six months after the birth of the first child. The group with a child and no marriage does not exceed 2 per cent. Among

Table 5.2   (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in Flanders, by gender and cohort

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
Leaving the parental Home and								
First union								
=	88	86	85	91	91	88	88	90
<	12	14	15	9	9	12	12	10
>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(%)	(92)	(89)	(74)	(20)	(96)	(94)	(87)	(45)
Entry labour market								
=	9	6	10	13	8	10	10	16
<	10	11	10	8	9	11	12	16
>	81	83	80	79	83	79	78	68
(%)	(93)	(91)	(78)	(27)	(94)	(93)	(87)	(49)
Marriage and Leaving the parental home								
=	83	80	73	79	88	84	81	83
<	1	0	1	3	1	1	1	1
>	16	20	26	18	11	15	18	16
(%)	(90)	(85)	(66)	(15)	(94)	(90)	(79)	(34)
First union								
=	91	90	82	88	94	90	88	86
<	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
>	8	10	17	12	5	9	11	12
(%)	(91)	(85)	(66)	(15)	(94)	(91)	(81)	(35)
First child and First union								
=	16	10	8	-	17	13	8	24
<	0	0	0	-	0	0	1	0
>	84	90	92	-	83	87	91	76
(%)	(83)	(76)	(45)	(5)	(88)	(83)	(60)	(12)
First marriage								
=	16	12	12	-	16	15	10	23
<	2	1	3	-	1	2	1	1
>	82	87	85	-	83	83	89	75
(%)	(82)	(76)	(44)	(5)	(88)	(83)	(59)	(11)

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Flanders (1991-92), CBGS Brussels.
=   both events occurred within 6 months of each other
<   first event preceded second by more than 6 months
>   first event followed second after more than 6 months
(%) total percentage of persons having experienced both events

the cohorts born in the 1950s, the average pause between a first marriage and a first birth amounts to two and a half years. More than 90 per cent of the Flemish FFS respondents are married at first birth (Lodewijckx, 1999).

5.3.4   Deviations and variations

Deviations from the traditional transition to adulthood do exist, however. The close connection between leaving the parental home, first union and first marriage may leave little room for other living arrangements. Still, among these post-war cohorts 15 per cent had experience with unmarried cohabitation, with one third of them cohabiting for less than one year (Corijn, 1994). Living alone among young adults is less popular: only 10 per cent had experience with it. In contrast to experience, preferences for unmarried cohabitation amount to 50 per cent, those for living alone to 10 per cent (Corijn, 1993). Previous comparative work with the Netherlands has revealed the low level and slow growth of less traditional patterns in Flanders (Corijn & Manting, 1998; Corijn & De Beer, 1996). The age at which young adults enter a first union is strikingly similar in both countries, but the type of union makes all the difference. The proportion starting off as an unmarried couple among the Flemish cohort of 1961-65 has still to reach the level of the Dutch cohort of 1950-54 (Liefbroer et al., 1996).

Flanders is the most traditional region of Belgium. With regard to the transition to adulthood and based on census data, only some of the differences with Wallonia are well-documented. The census, however, is not a good source of information on unmarried cohabitation. Mérenne et al. (1997) illustrate some of the regional differences. Among women, marriage and motherhood as well as lone motherhood before the age of 25 are much more common in Wallonia. Among men aged 25 to 29, living at the parental home is more common in Wallonia, especially in rural and suburban areas that are rich and have a high scolarity degree. The prevalence of non-marital births varies from 8 per cent in Flanders, 18 per cent in Wallonia to 21 per cent in Brussels, for a total of 13 per cent for the country as a whole in 1991 (NIS, 1995).

The next paragraph analyses to what kind of characteristics deviations from the standard patterns are linked.

5.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

As mentioned in Chapter one, in this section we focus on the impact of socio-economic (educational attainment and educational / occupational position) and socio-cultural (religious background) variables on the timing of the transition to adulthood. The role of the educational attainment in the

family formation process is part of Becker's New Home Economics (1981), which was further articulated by Blossfeld (1995). An increase in educational attainment can be regarded as an investment in human capital giving more access to career-oriented employment opportunities. Lesthaeghe (1997) on the other hand stresses the complementarity of socio-economic and socio-cultural determinants of demographic behaviour. For the post-war cohorts experiencing a strong secularisation, religion is an appropriate indicator of these socio-cultural developments. However, characteristics associated with the educational attainment and the ideological affiliation interact with each other. A higher education entails changes in beliefs and values that can affect family formation behaviour.

Table 5.3 presents the relative risks for the determinants of the four events constituting the transition to adulthood for males and females separately. Model 1 only includes the main variables of interest, namely, the educational attainment, the religious background and the educational / occupational career, controlled by a cohort variable and some background characteristics. Model 2 includes additionally all significant interactions of the central variables with age. As the events of leaving the parental home, first union and first marriage are so strongly connected in Flanders, the impact of the different factors is often very analogous.

5.4.1 Impact of education

The cohorts born since 1950 grew up in the middle of the process of educational expansion, including the extension of the compulsory school age. Particularly women benefited from this expansion, resulting in a reduction of the gender differences in educational attainment. In Flanders these differences reversed with the 1950-70 cohort, in the sense that these women are somewhat better educated than men (Corijn, 1993).

Even in the process of prolonged education and a destandardised and individualised life course, it is obvious that the educational career remains largely incompatible with the start of a household and family career. *Being enrolled in education* among men is least incompatible with leaving the parental home, as higher education can imply an early departure. The impact

Table 5.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Flanders: relative risks

independent variables	Males							
	leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Educational level	1.02	0.77**	1.03	0.70**	1.03	0.68**	0.96*	0.78**
Activity status								
- enrolled	0.34**	0.71	0.18**	0.04**	0.14**	0.03**	0.17**	0.18**
- unemployed	0.48**	0.48**	0.43**	0.44**	0.40**	0.40**	0.38**	0.40**
- part-time job	0.36*	0.37*	0.30**	0.30**	0.16**	0.17**	0.17*	0.17*
- full-time job	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Parental religion								
- regularly practising Catholics	0.93	0.57*	0.99	0.46**	1.24*	0.53*	1.32*	1.32*
- irregularly practising Catholics	0.91	0.67*	1.05	0.63*	1.21	0.69	1.18	1.18
- non-practising Catholics	0.98	0.84	1.02	0.79	1.17	0.88	1.30*	1.30*
- non-Catholics	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Parental education	1.13**	1.12**	0.99	0.97	0.96	0.94	0.98	0.97
Parental divorce	1.42**	1.42**	1.45**	1.43**	1.31**	1.29**	1.43**	1.42**
Birth cohort	0.83**	0.83**	0.79**	0.79**	0.74**	0.74**	0.79**	0.79**

Table 5.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Flanders: relative risks (cont.)

	Males							
independent variables	leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Age								
- 14-16	0.01**	0.04**	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
- 17-18	0.24**	0.52*	0.08***	0.32**	0.07***	0.31**	0.12**	0.21**
- 19-20	0.47**	0.71*	0.43***	0.76	0.38***	0.71*	0.31**	0.42**
- 21-22	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
- 23-24	1.37**	1.01	1.34**	0.87	1.23**	0.78	1.53**	1.07
- 25-26	1.11	0.73	1.04	0.53***	1.01	0.52***	2.54***	1.21
- 27-28	0.82	0.59	0.82	0.41**	0.64***	0.35***	2.52***	0.80
- 29-30	0.68	0.68	0.53***	0.34*	0.45***	0.35*	2.42***	0.50
- 31-32	0.12**	0.21	0.32***	0.33	0.34***	0.50	1.82***	0.25***
- 33-34	0.16**	0.59	0.18***	0.36	0.14***	0.51	0.94	0.08***
- 35-36	0.18**	1.57	0.09***	0.40	0.11**	1.08	0.47	0.03***
- 37-40	0.34	-	0.18	-	0.25*	-	0.57	0.02**
Education²		-		-		-		-
Educational level * age		1.05**		1.06**		1.07**		1.02**
Educational level * age²		0.80**		0.79***		0.75***		-
Enrolment * age		0.89**		1.23**		1.20**		-
Unemployment * age		-		-		-		-
Parental religion * age		0.98*		0.97*		0.97**		-
Number of events	1303	1303	1217	1217	1131	1131	898	898
Log-likelihood	-6874	-6859	-6366	-6344	-6025	-6004	-5212	-5206

Table 5.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Flanders: relative risks (cont.)

independent variables	Females							
	leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Educational level	0.99	0.72**	0.96*	0.53**	0.99	0.52**	0.91**	0.54**
Activity status								
- enrolled	0.23**	0.24**	0.10**	0.02**	0.07**	0.00**	0.09**	0.01**
- unemployed	0.99	2.01**	1.06	1.93**	1.01	1.75***	2.08**	5.19***
- part-time job	0.97	0.98	0.98	1.00	0.99	1.02	1.30**	1.32**
- full-time job	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Parental religion								
- regularly practising								
Catholics	0.83*	0.83*	0.89	0.46**	1.31**	0.63*	1.30**	0.51**
- irregularly practising								
Catholics	0.95	0.95	1.02	0.67**	1.41**	0.86	1.36**	0.73
- non-practising								
Catholics	1.08	1.09	1.11	0.89	1.32**	1.01	1.32*	0.97
- non-Catholics	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Parental education	0.99	0.98	0.92*	0.91**	0.90**	0.88**	0.96	0.94
Parental divorce	1.14*	1.14*	1.12	1.11	0.88	0.88	0.92	0.91
Birth cohort	0.92**	0.92**	0.90**	0.89**	0.83**	0.84**	0.79**	0.78**

Table 5.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Flanders: relative risks (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Age								
- 14-16	0.03**	0.27**	0.06**	0.50	0.07***	0.46*	0.06**	0.90
- 17-18	0.39***	1.30	0.29***	0.86	0.30***	0.79	0.23**	1.13
- 19-20	0.70***	1.19	0.70***	1.17	0.77***	1.21	0.57**	1.24
- 21-22	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
- 23-24	1.15*	0.87	1.08	0.75**	0.95	0.67***	1.47**	0.70**
- 25-26	1.00	0.80	0.80	0.47***	0.63***	0.37***	2.01**	0.51**
- 27-28	0.67*	0.77	0.52***	0.33***	0.43***	0.25***	1.98**	0.32**
- 29-30	0.35***	0.80	0.35***	0.30*	0.28***	0.19***	1.10	0.14**
- 31-32	0.17***	1.08*	0.26***	0.35	0.28***	0.27	0.75	0.09**
- 33-34	0.09**	1.95**	0.30***	0.85	0.17***	0.28	0.63	0.09**
- 35-36	0.26	-	0.00	0.00	0.05***	0.20	0.13**	0.03**
- 37-40	0.38	-	0.06	-	0.28***	-	0.09*	0.03*
Education²		-		1.01*		1.01**		-
Educational level * age		1.07**		1.06**		1.05***		1.07**
Educational level * age²		0.71**		0.80***		0.83***		0.82***
Enrolment * age		-		1.38***		1.47***		1.37***
Unemployment * age		2.01**		0.92***		0.92***		0.91**
Parental religion * age		-		0.97***		0.97***		0.97***
Number of events	2352	2352	2235	2235	2059	2059	1650	1650
Log-likelihood	-11588	-11553	-11062	-10982	-10516	-10438	-9219	-9133

* p < .05   ** p < .01
Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Flanders (1991-92), CBGS Brussels.

of the enrolment is age-specific: until age 30 among men and until age 26 among women the impact is negative but diminishing across age, whereas it becomes positive thereafter. So the negative impact of enrolment on the incompatibility decreases across age. The only exception is for men for whom the impact of enrolment enlarges across age with regard to leaving the parental home: the older they are, the stronger the negative impact of enrolment on leaving the parental home. Gender-differences are age-specific.

The level of the *educational attainment* plays a central role in family formation theories. Empirical results, however, show that the impact of the educational level is gender-specific (Huinink, 1995), cohort-specific (Manting, 1994; Blom, 1994; Brüderl & Diekmann, 1994), event-specific (Liefbroer et al., 1996), age-specific (Corijn, 1996), and culture-specific (Blossfeld, 1995). There are also indications that it is not only the level of education that matters but also the kind of education (Hoem, 1997). Controlling for being enrolled in education or not, and using a time-varying indicator of educational attainment, it is obvious that in Flanders the educational level has an impact on the timing of the transition to adulthood. This impact is age-, gender- and event-specific. Among men, the impact of the educational level is negative when they are starting their transition under age 21-22; it becomes zero when they make their transition during their twenties and negative again when they do so in their thirties. So it is only when these events take place very much 'off time' that there is a negative impact of the educational level, not when they happen 'on time'. Only with regard to the timing of the first fatherhood do we see that the age-specific impact of the educational level is linear: it is very negative at young ages, becomes zero at about age 29 and changes into a positive effect from that age on. As such the delaying effect of higher education on first fatherhood at younger ages is caught up at later ages. Among women the impact of the educational level is negative up to their late twenties. Thereafter it remains zero, suggesting that there is no catching up.

More generally, we can conclude that the negative impact of the educational level on the timing of the transition events is strongest at the youngest and oldest ages: higher educated young adults postpone those steps at too young ages and at too old ages. Only for first fatherhood we do see a catching up effect.

5.4.2   Impact of occupational career

Conceptualising the transition to adulthood as the start of a double career, one has to look at the mutual impact of the occupational and family career. In Flanders the post-war cohorts were at young adult age hit by unemployment. Part-time employment has become more widespread among women in Flanders during the 1980s. This expansion has been made possible by the active government promotion of part-time employment - especially as a system to escape unemployment (Callens, 1995). Part-time work was a real possibility for entering the labour market, particularly for young women even if they were single and childless.

In Flanders *unemployment* slows down the transition to adulthood of men as it reduces by more than 50 per cent - compared to full-time employment - the chances of leaving the parental home, entering a first union, getting married and getting a first child. In contrast, among women the effect of unemployment on the transition to adulthood is age-specific for the three household formation events. This impact decreases from a positive impact at the youngest ages to a zero impact at about 20-22 years and goes down to a very negative impact at the oldest ages. So at the youngest ages unemployment forces or stimulates women to start their own household. Unemployment has no effect if events are 'on time'. From age 25 on, unemployment really leads to a further postponement of the household formation process, although the strength of this impact depends on the event in question. It is strongest on the birth of a first child. Unemployment increases the likelihood of a first childbirth by a factor 5, an effect that does not vary with age. Employment seems to be very incompatible with first-time motherhood and, as such, it postpones it.

Among men, it is *part-time work* that slows down the transition to adulthood, even more so than unemployment. However, part-time jobs among men are almost non-existent (Callens, 1995). Among women, there is no specific effect of part-time work as those with a part-time job behave the same as those with a full-time job, except for the timing of first motherhood. Childless women with a part-time job have 32 per cent more chance of a first birth than women with a full-time job. In Flanders one-fifth of the employed women worked part-time in 1991 when they were pregnant for the first time. Ten to twenty years ago this was true for just one in thirty women.

The start of the family and work careers interfere with each other, but not in the same way among men and women. No (job-related) income or a reduced

(job-related) income delays the transition for men. No income hinders the transition for women over age 25, whereas a reduced income and/or time investment in the labour market plays no role. The latter only increases the likelihood of first motherhood, as a part-time job is more compatible with it than a full-time job. Existing theories on the psychological processes of this interaction, and on the role of an orientation towards a career or towards a combination of careers, however, are still weak (Hakim, 1996).

5.4.3   Impact of religion

Secularisation is often cited as an important determinant of the changes in the family formation process and family system (Wilcox & Jelen, 1993). The large majority of the post-war cohorts in Flanders were raised in Catholic families. Cohort comparisons with regard to church attendance in the FFS sample do not reflect an increasing secularisation (Corijn, 1993).

Using dummies for the religion in the parental home, the results show that generally young adults from regularly practising Catholic families and in some case those from irregularly practising Catholic families postpone the transition to adulthood. Young adults from non-practising Catholic families behave in this respect as those from non-Catholics families. In all cases but two the effect of the parental religion is age-specific. The general trend of this effect is that the less religious the parental home, the more likely it is that these events take place at very young ages. Around the ages of 20-25 there is no obvious effect of the parental religion. Among those who have not taken those steps at early or normal ages, those from a less Catholic parental home more often further postpone these steps. There is no obvious gender-specificity in these cases. In the case of young women leaving the parental home, the effect is not age-specific and slightly positive: daughters from less religious families leave the parental home earlier. In the case of young men the impact of the religious background on the first fatherhood is also not age-specific: sons from regularly practising Catholic families and those from non-practising Catholic families become sooner father than the others. The absence of any age-specificity in these cases is not easy to understand.

In previous analyses on these data, we found that the parental religion very strongly influences the way the parental home is left, i.e. with or without marriage, with or without a partner (Corijn, 1996; Corijn & Manting, 1998). Sons from non-Catholic families are almost two times more likely than sons from regularly practising families to leave the parental home without marriage. They are also three times more likely to do so than leaving the paren-

tal home with marriage. Among women these odds ratios change with age. Differences between the most and the least religious were not obvious at normal ages (21-23). Differences between a departure with and without a marriage are strongest for the regularly practising Catholics at normal ages (21-23) and for the irregularly practising Catholics at older ages (from 23 on), where marriage is favoured more than twice as much as non-marriage (Corijn, 1996).

Using the religion and frequency of church attendance of the respondent at the time of the interview in stead of that in the parental home, we find no effect among men and an age-specific effect among women on the parent-hood timing. This confirms the gender-specificity hypothesis (5b). From age 20 on the effect among women becomes increasingly negative. Furthermore, the longer first motherhood is being postponed, the stronger the impact of non-religiosity becomes. In another analysis, we found that among couples (in their first union) there was a negative impact of the own religion on the timing of the first parenthood among men and women, with the effect among women being somewhat stronger (Corijn, 1996).

5.4.4 Impact of other factors

The postponement of the transition to adulthood across *birth cohorts* was already clear from the descriptive analysis (table 5.1). But also in the multi-variate analyses, taking into account developments in the educational level, the religious background and the educational / occupational career and the other variables included, a significant negative cohort effect shows up.

Besides the effect of the educational level of the respondent, there is in two cases an additional impact of the *educational level in the parental home*. Sons from a higher social class leave the parental home earlier, whereas daughters from a higher social class marry later. The former can afford to explore more of their young adult life from outside the parental home; the latter before marriage. Previous analysis had revealed that a higher educa-tion of the parents reduced the chance of home-leaving by marriage and increased the chances of home-leaving without a partner (Corijn & Manting, 1998).

For all events among men, there was a positive impact of experiencing a *parental divorce*. Among women this was only the case for leaving the pa-rental home. A parental divorce leads to an earlier independence. In a previ-ous analysis, we found that the experience of a parental divorce was very significant in determining the way the parental home was left: young men

having experienced a parental divorce were two times more likely to leave the parental home without marriage than with a marriage. For women this effect changed with age, being strongest at the youngest ages (Corijn, 1996).

The *family size in the parental home* has only an effect on the timing of first motherhood.

5.5 | Discussion and conclusions

Starting with the cohort born in 1951-55, we observe in Flanders fully the postponement trend in the education-occupation transition and in the household and family formation process.

According to the destandardisation / individualisation thesis a shift is taking place from a standard biography to a choice biography, or applied to the theme of this study, from a standard transition to a choice transition to adulthood.The timing of events in the family career became more spread out, i.e. disconnected from a certain *age*. Theoretically, this can be considered as a reflection of increased opportunities for a choice transition but also of increased restrictions on experiencing an event at a specific age. A growing disconnection of events *from each other* indicates that one event no longer leads automatically to another event. Again, this trend can either reflect greater freedom of choice for the individual to determine which events coincide or follow each other. Or it can reflect more restrictions on making those events coincide or follow each other. The traditional connection between the departure from the parental home, marriage and first childbirth remains strongly prevalent in Flanders. At least until the 1960s marriage in Western European countries was the sole pathway out of the parental home, presuming that young adults could financially afford this step. The descriptive results of the transition to adulthood reveal that young adults in Flanders (still) strongly relate their independence from the parental home to, marriage. Marriage has not yet lost its function as main avenue to independence from the parental home. But the traditional pattern of leaving the parental home at the time of marriage followed by parenthood varies strongly according to the educational level and the religion/church attendance gradient.

In terms of residential (in)dependence, Flemish young adults have to choose for marriage when leaving the parental home, as there are ideological restrictions on choosing for unmarried cohabitation, living alone or unmarried parenthood. These routes to independence, if chosen, are mainly made by

non-Catholics, which seems to be more a reflection of their larger degree of freedom than of any possible constraints. The near absence of these less traditional living arrangements explains the rather young age at first marriage in Flanders, which is close to e.g. the age at first union in the Netherlands (Liefbroer et al., 1996). In terms of financial independence, young men take strongly the burden of sole breadwinner, and young women count on this, at least at early ages. Financial dependence on the parents is exchanged for financial dependence on employed husbands. State support for the financial independence of young adults is very weak. Students have few opportunities to leave the parental home, even without marriage. In Belgium the eligibility for a scholarship (about 170 Euro per month at most) depends on the parental income. To be considered as an independent student who is entitled to a larger scholarship, one must have received an income for 18 months. It is fair to say therefore that the social welfare system keeps students at their parents' home and under their parents' financial responsibility. The social benefits for the transition from education to work are weak too: there is first an unpaid waiting time, followed by a period with a waiting benefit (lower than the minimum social benefit) and finally a low unemployment benefit. Within the economic context of moderate unemployment in Flanders, unemployment has disturbed young men's lives more than women's. The state does not support financially any residential independence, e.g. by a renting subsidy or by social housing for young singles or childless couples. In terms of emotional (in)dependence the parental home is exchanged for the marriage. Only those, whose parental home broke down by divorce start the transition to adulthood earlier. Also Hill et al. (1996) found that parental divorce, regardless of the stage in which it occurred, promoted early household formation, particularly among boys.

Do young adults not want to become independent (from their parents) in another way than by marriage? And if they do, at what price? Are there financial or other constraints that hinder their independence or is there a growing preference to stay longer dependent on the parental family? The explanatory results indicate that particularly among males financial aspects (may) play a restrictive role. In Flanders the traditional pattern of the male breadwinner whose economic self-sufficiency is the basis for the marriage timing, has not yet lost its prevalent character. Independence in unmarried cohabitation seems to be of short duration (Corijn, 1994). Independence in living alone is not attractive; very few choose it, most want to leave it (Corijn, 1993).

For the process of destandardisation it is relevant to know whether the social differentiation in the transition to adulthood persists, disappears or reap-

pears. In Flanders structural, familial and individual factors do still make for strong differentiations in the timing of the transition to adulthood. Structural factors such as enrolment and male unemployment do have a serious impact. Enrolment is incompatible with the transition to adulthood, even with leaving the parental home among women. Unemployment delays the steps towards independence, except for very young women. Galland (1997) found also for France, that young women seeking employment frequently decide to live as a couple rather than remain living with their parents. In contrast, unemployment favours first motherhood. Part-time employment only delays steps towards independence among men. Familial factors also shape the transition to adulthood. The religious background does this for both men and women, particularly when events are 'off-time'. Non-Catholics are the forerunners towards a less traditional transition. They have more options available. Their behaviour is spreading out to non-practising Catholics, but has not yet affected the practising Catholics. Although the transition to adulthood among non-Catholics follows a different timing pattern along different pathways, the eventual (temporary) destination of almost all of them is married parenthood. A parental divorce stimulates an earlier independence. Social class and parental family size have specific effects. As an individual factor, the educational level does strongly influence the transition to adulthood, but this impact is very much age-specific. 'Off-time' behaviour is most subject to educational differences.

In socio-demographic research, time seems to have passed that one was interested in life course aspects of only one gender group. Particularly with regard to the transition to adulthood there is no longer a reason for this. The transition to adulthood is different for men and women, not only with regard to timing but also with regard to age dispersal, event order and social structuring. Religious structuring is sometimes more important among women. The employment career interferes differently with the family formation process, i.e. being employed or not does influence men's marriage risk more than women's.The opposite is true for the timing of first parenthood. Further research must clarify whether differentiations in the kind and amount of job experience can refine this profile. Some events in the transition to adulthood must be based on a joint decision of the partners involved, and are probably influenced by both their characteristics. In a comparative study with the Netherlands this couple dimension was already touched upon (Corijn et al., 1996).

The influence of factors on the transition to adulthood is very much age-specific. All kinds of age-dependence show up: in the case of the educational level, the impact is extreme at 'off-time' ages; in the case of female

unemployment, the impact becomes stronger with age; in the case of educational enrolment, the impact becomes weaker with age; in the case of the religious background, the impact is opposite at extreme ages. Considering the transition to adulthood in Flanders as rather traditional, it seems that the impact of socio-economic and socio-cultural aspects across the age range is changing.

In Flanders leaving the parental home, entering a first union and a first marriage are steps towards independence that are very much connected. As such, these steps are subject to the same factors operating in very similar ways, leaving little room for event-specificity. As the first parenthood follows in general 2,5 years after the first marriage, also this timing is generally subject to similar factors. However, some specific features show up, particularly with regard to the occupational career of fathers and mothers.

5.6 | References

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Figure 5.1. Timing of the transition to adulthood in Flanders, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort

Leaving the parental home

*Figure 5.1. Timing of the transition to adulthood in Flanders,
inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

First (un)married cohabitation
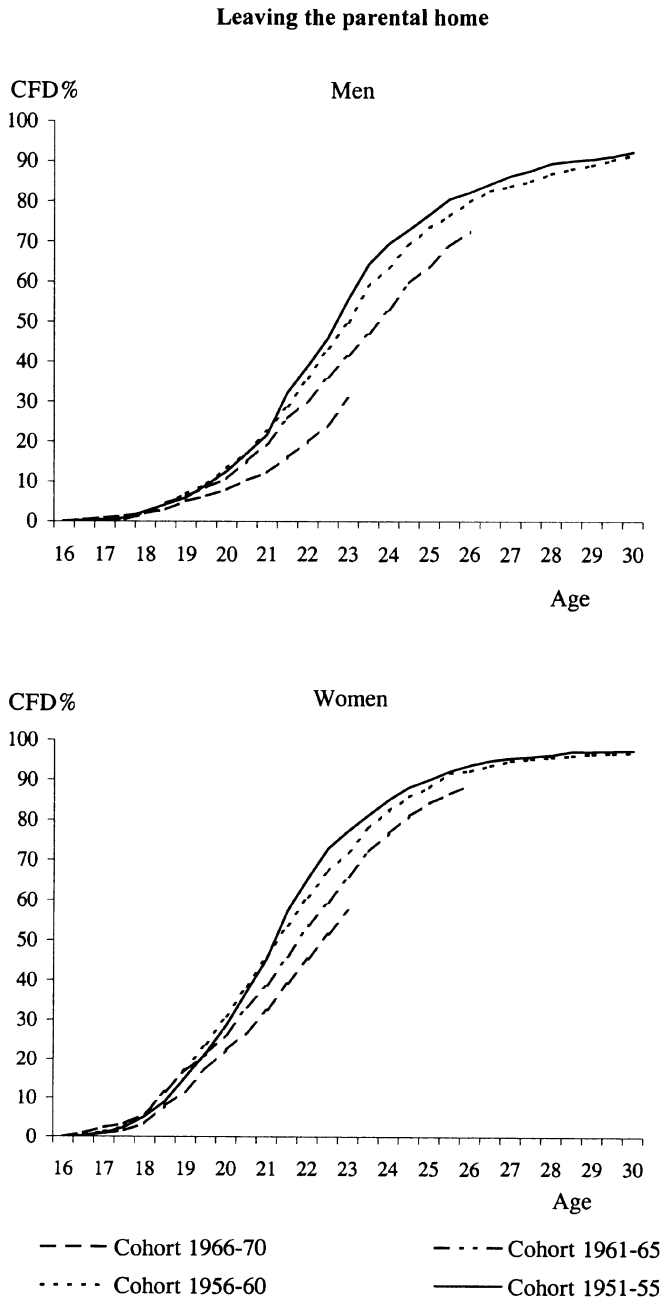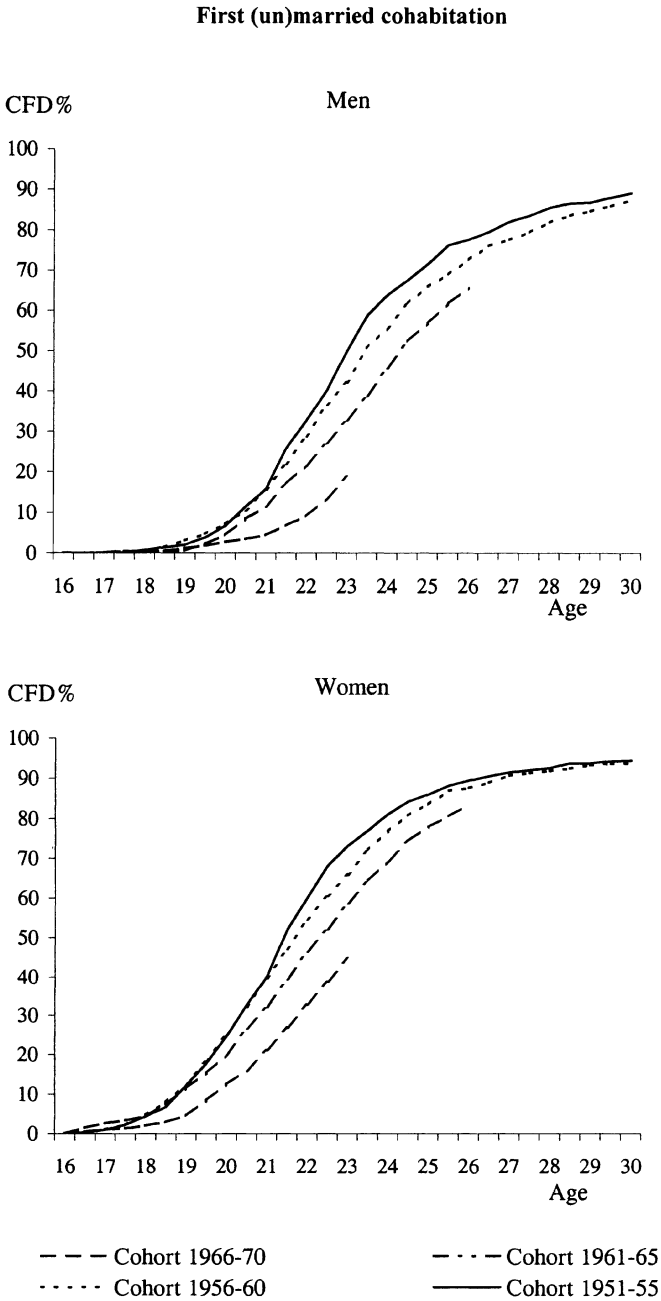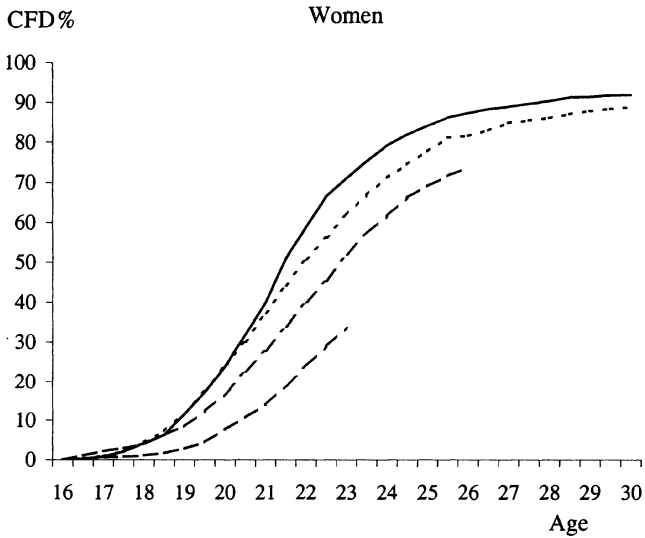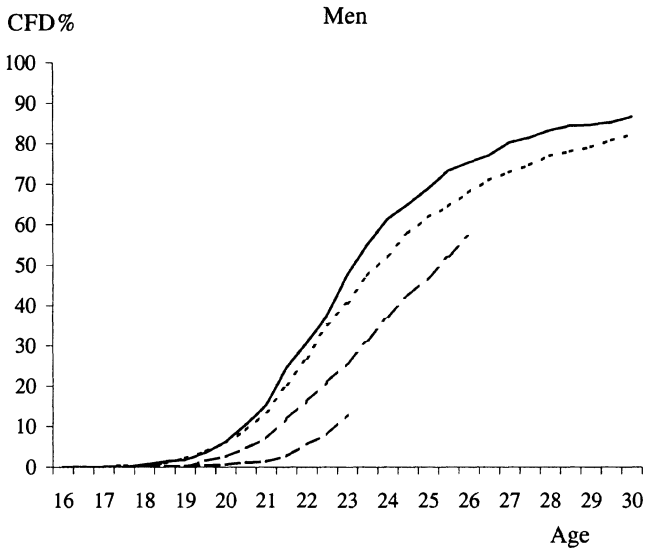
- - - Cohort 1966-70   - · - Cohort 1961-65
· · · · · Cohort 1956-60   ———— Cohort 1951-55

*Figure 5.1. Timing of the transition to adulthood in Flanders,
inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

First marriage

CFD%   Men

CFD%   Women

— — — Cohort 1966-70   — · · — Cohort 1961-65
· · · · · Cohort 1956-60   ———— Cohort 1951-55

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*Figure 5.1. Timing of the transition to adulthood in Flanders,
inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

Birth of a first child

CFD% Men

CFD% Women

- - - Cohort 1966-70   - · - Cohort 1961-65
· · · · Cohort 1956-60   ——— Cohort 1951-55
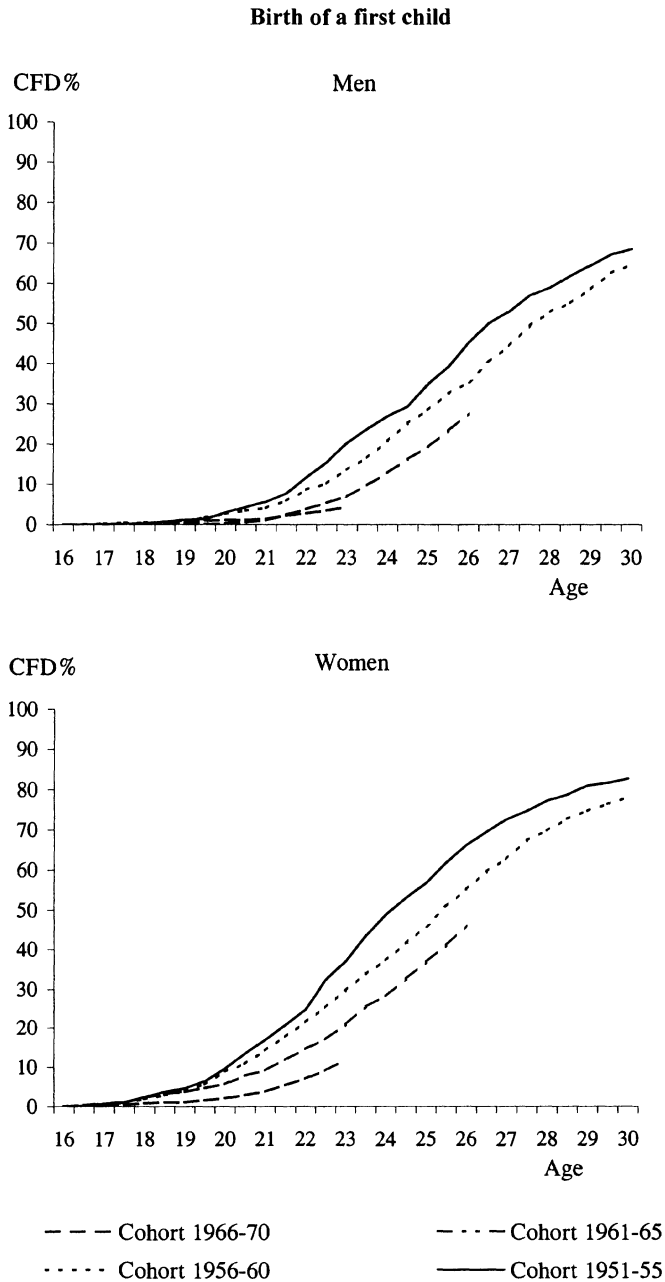
Source: FFS (1991-92) in Flanders, CBGS, Brussels.

6. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN FRANCE

MARTINE CORIJN

6.1 | Introduction

The transition to adulthood for the post-war cohorts in France was during the 1990s the research topic of specific surveys. In 1992 the 'Enquête Jeunes' organised by INSEE was held among the birth cohorts of 1963-74 who were at that time young adults of about 18 to 29 years old. Different aspects of their occupational and family transitions were analysed (INSEE, 1995). In 1993 the survey 'Passage à l'age adulte' organised by INED was conducted among the birth cohorts of 1958-68 who were at that time about 25 to 34 years old. Bozon and Villeneuve-Gokalp (1994) focused on the intergenerational relationships of these young adults. Based on the more general survey 'Situations familiales', organised by INED in 1986 among the birth cohorts of 1941-60, Toulemon (1994) focused on the new situation of women in their steps towards adulthood while Leridon and Toulemon (1995) analysed the timing of the first union, whether unmarried cohabitation or marriage. The process of leaving the parental home in France has also been examined in great detail (Villeneuve-Gokalp, 1997; Galland, 1997).

The changes in the transition to adulthood in France have been dominated by the fact that in a short time marriage lost its role as couple-forming ritual. The fall in the age of women at their first marriage halted and rose again around 1975. The ensuing delay of first marriages coincided with a strong increase in the proportion never married. The proportion of non-marital un-

ions began to rise in the late 1960s, shortly before marriages started to de-
cline. In 1970, one union in five was formed outside marriage; by 1990, this
proportion had reached four out of five. Prior to 1981-82, the increase in the
number of unmarried couples and the decline in the number of married cou-
ples balanced each other out so that the proportion of persons living in a
union remained fairly stable. Since then this proportion declined (Toulemon
& de Guibert-Lantoine, 1998).

The postponement of the first birth started with the cohorts born in the
1950s (Toulemon, 1994). The decreasing role of marriage stimulated the
development of non-marital fertility which rose from 11 per cent in 1980 to
30 per cent a decade later, and which continues to increase as of today
(Toulemon & de Guibert-Lantoine, 1998).

High proportions of unmarried unions and of unmarried parents became the
main characteristics of the transition to adulthood in France.

6.2 | Data and methods

In France, the INSEE organises each year the Employment Survey. In 1994,
a sub-sample of this survey was selected to represent the French Fertility
and Family Survey (FFS). Of the 32,000 respondents in the Employment
Survey, 5,900 were selected for the FFS. The final sample consisted of
2,000 men and 3,000 women aged 20-49 (birth cohorts 1944-73), plus 100
persons aged under 20 or over 50 living in a household containing no 'eligi-
ble adult' but at least one child aged under 18 (Toulemon & de Guibert-
Lantoine, 1998).

In order to be conform with the cohort selection in the other country chap-
ters, the results of the French FFS are here confined to the birth cohorts of
1951-70.

The constraints specific to the French FFS data collection (interview con-
ducted at the end of another survey) implied that the survey did not include
all the questions of the FFS core questionnaire prepared by the United Na-
tions Economic Commission for Europe. But data are available to describe
the timing of the main events of the start of the family career: the departure
from the parental home, the start of a first union (being unmarried or mar-
ried) and the birth of a first child. The transition from education to work can
be described by the timing of the end of education and that of the first entry
into the labour market.

To describe the timing of the transition to adulthood survival curves and quartile measures are used; after all not all respondents have already experienced the events under study. The order of particular pairs of events could only be checked for those respondents who had experienced both. The share of those having experienced particular pairs of events varied strongly across cohorts. The determinants of the timing of the different events of the family formation process were analysed by means of an exponential hazard model with a control for age; to this end, use was made of the TDA software (Röhwer, 1997). The shortened version of the French FFS questionnaire limited mainly the availability of independent variables. For instance, the impact of the occupational career on the family formation process could not be analysed, because no full reconstruction of the occupational career was available, only of the educational career. Questions on ideological background can not be asked in French surveys. Information on the parental background was restricted to the experience of a parental divorce. The main independent variable in the analysis is the educational attainment as measured by the highest level completed at the time of the interview. International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) scores were grouped into four categories: 0 (no education), 1-2 (primary education and first stage of secondary education), 3 (second stage of secondary education) and 4-6 (higher education). All data were weighed.

6.3 │ Timing of the transition to adulthood

6.3.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood

The 'average' transition to adulthood for the post-war cohorts in France is best described by the median ages of two events of the educational/occupational career, namely, the end of education and the first entry into the labour market, and by those of the four events of the union and family formation process, namely, leaving the parental home, the start of the first union, the first marriage and the birth of the first child. As Table 6.1 (below) and Figure 6.1 (appendix) show, the timing of the transition to adulthood is gender- and cohort-specific.

The restriction of the window of observation to the birth cohorts of 1951-70 hinders to see the relative position of these cohorts in a more long-term perspective. However, with regard to some events of the transition to adulthood, it is clear that the cohorts born in the late 1950s experienced some events at earlier ages than their predecessors; they did so during the late 1970s.

Due to the educational expansion in the post-war period in France young people stayed longer in school. This prolongation of the educational enrolment is still in progress for the 1951-70 cohort. Particularly the 1966-70 cohort stayed longer in school. The median age *at leaving the educational system* increased for this cohort by one year and is now over age 19. Differences in this regard between young men and women are almost non-existent. Among the 20 to 24 years old, the percentage of students rose from 16 per cent in 1975 to 43 per cent in 1994 (Meron and Minni, 1995).

Young male adults of the three oldest cohorts shifted their median age at *first entry into the labour market* from 18 to 19 years, young female adults from 19 to 20 years. The youngest cohort added one extra year to this postponement that strongly reduced the share of young adults on the labour market. Among the 20 to 24 years old, the percentage employed decreased from 70 per cent in 1975 to 38 per cent in 1994. At the same time, however, the percentage of unemployed in this age group tripled, from 5 to 14 per cent (Meron and Minni, 1995). Galland (1995) makes a distinction between the first entry into the labour market and the start of a stable job. For the 1963-66 cohort of the 'Enquête Jeunes', there is a time lag of about two years between the median ages at both events. These kinds of results reveal clearly how the entry into the labour market is a long process instead of a single event. This gradual postponement of the transition from education to employment could already be observed among the 1941-60 cohort (Toulemon, 1994).

With regard to the timing of *leaving the parental home,* a turning point among the 1951-70 birth cohorts is clearly observable. Across the 1951-60 cohorts, the median age at leaving the parental home was still decreasing. As a result of this, the cohort born in the late 1950s left the parental home at the youngest ages; this was around 1975. The cohorts of the 1960s started to increasingly postpone this event. This postponement is stronger among males than among females.

Girls leave the parental home some two years earlier than boys. Part of this gender difference can be explained by the role of the military service, which is not treated as a departure (Toulemon and de Guibert-Lantoine, 1998). In the FFS, the timing of leaving the parental home is measured by the date of a single event. Villeneuve-Gokalp (1997) criticises this by illustrating that between the start and the end of the process of leaving the parental home there is a three years gap among men and a one-year gap among women. Her conclusion therefore is that 'Décohabitation familiale et accès à

Table 6.1 *Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in France, by gender and cohort (in years;months)*

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment								
Q1*	17;0	16;7	17;2	17;6	16;9	16;5	16;10	17;9
Q2	18;2	17;9	18;2	19;1	18;2	17;10	18;2	19;3
Q3	21;0	20;2	20;4	22;8	20;4	19;8	20;9	22;4
Q3-Q1	4;0	3;7	3;2	5;2	3;7	3;3	3;11	4;7
% not at age 25	10	11	11	13	8	9	9	15
Entry into labour market								
Q1	16;6	16;6	17;5	18;5	17;6	17;2	18;0	18;8
Q2	18;2	18;0	18;6	20;6	19;4	19;0	20;2	21;0
Q3	21;2	20;4	21;6	23;0	22;4	21;10	23;4	23;2
Q3-Q1	4;8	3;10	4;1	4;7	4;10	4;8	5;4	4;4
% not at age 25	4	7	8	14	17	16	18	14
Leaving the parental home								
Q1	19;6	19;0	19;11	20;0	18;6	18;3	18;6	18;11
Q2	21;8	21;1	22;1	23;0	20;3	19;8	20;0	20;8
Q3	24;8	23;4	25;0	25;8	22;4	21;10	22;8	23;1
Q3-Q1	5;2	4;4	5;1	5;8	3;10	3;7	4;2	4;2
% not at age 30	7	8	9	-	4	3	7	-
First union								
Q1	21;4	21;2	21;6	22;6	19;4	19;1	19;5	19;10
Q2	23;8	23;0	23;10	24;6	21;4	20;10	21;8	22;2
Q3	26;10	26;10	27;4	-	24;0	23;2	24;9	25;2
Q3-Q1	5;6	5;8	5;10	-	4;8	4;1	5;4	5;4
% not at age 30	13	16	20	-	8	9	13	-
First marriage								
Q1	22;1	22;6	24;3	27;0	19;11	20;1	21;3	23;1
Q2	25;4	26;4	29;5	-	22;0	22;8	25;10	27;3
Q3	30;3	-	-	-	25;2	30;5	-	-
Q3-Q1	8;2	-	-	-	5;3	10;4	-	-
% not at age 30	26	35	47	-	16	25	40	-
First child birth								
Q1	24;0	24;10	25;8	27;4	20;10	21;0	21;9	22;7
Q2	27;4	28;2	29;6	-	24;0	24;0	25;4	25;8
Q3	35;2	34;9	-	-	28;10	28;4	29;4	-
Q3-Q1	11;2	9;11	-	-	8;0	7;4	7;7	-
% not at age 30	35	38	48	-	20	21	23	-

Source: Fertility and Family Survey (1994), INED, Paris.
*Q1, Q2 and Q3 represent the first 3 quartiles (25, 50 and 75 per cent).

l'indépendance résidentielle sont devenus des processus progressifs et complexes, malaisément réductibles à une unique locution' (p. 149). Galland (1995) makes a distinction between living with the parents, a living arrangement away from but paid by the parents, and living independently. Using this distinction he finds that living independently takes place more than one year after leaving the parental home.

A similar turning point as with leaving the parental home across the 1951-70 cohort appears with regard to the timing of the *start of a first union*. Among the 1941-60 cohort not much variation could be observed in the age at the start of the first union; among this cohort the postponement of the first marriage was still largely compensated by the start of consensual unions (Toulemon, 1994). But the postponement of the entry into a first union truly started with the cohorts born in the 1960s. Among them marriage postponement was no longer fully compensated by consensual unions.

No such turning point among the 1951-70 cohort is apparent with regard to *the first marriage and first parenthood timing*. For both of them postponement trends started right with the early 1950s cohort, after the 1946-50 cohort had shown the lowest age at first marriage and first parenthood (Toulemon, 1994). The changes with regard to the timing of both events are so strong that for men in the youngest birth cohort even no median ages can be calculated. Among women under age 30 it can be observed that the cohorts of the 1960s postpone marriage longer than first parenthood. The percentages of young adults not having experienced these events by age 30 confirm this development.

The postponement of marriage and parenthood thus started some 10 years earlier than the postponement of leaving the parental home and starting a first union. The whole transition, from the end of education to the first birth, among men across the 1951-70 cohort takes more and more time. For women this does not seem to be the case. For young men, the whole transition takes about four years longer than for young women.

6.3.2   Disconnection from age

The degree of (de)standardisation of the transition to adulthood can best be gleaned from the inter-quartile range Q3-Q1 (Table 6.1), which measures the extent of (dis)connection of each event *from a particular age*. These inter-quartile ranges reveal that the late 1950s cohort in general had the smallest age ranges, i.e. for them the events were more age-dependent. The postponement trend among the 1960s cohorts coincides with a trend to more

age variety, as demonstrated by the increase in inter-quartile ranges. Thus, the hypothesis on the weakening age relatedness across cohorts (1a) is confirmed once the postponement trend is started: for the younger cohorts there is no longer a small or 'normal' age range for the events. Still, the exit from school and the entry into the labour market appear to remain the most age-related, whereas the marriage and parenthood timing the least. This is a confirmation of hypothesis 1b as formulated in Chapter 1.

6.3.3   Disconnection from each other

Leaving the parental home after having completed school and after having found a stable job, in order to start living with a partner at the time of marriage, followed soon by the birth of a first child has been for a long time a (social) standard. Table 6.2 shows the fading prevalence of this standard and illustrates to which degree events became disconnected from each other, and how sequences were reversed.

The traditional pattern of leaving the parental home after having started a first job is loosing significance. On the other hand, leaving the parental home before a first job is becoming more and more usual. Leaving the parental home at more or less the same time as a first job has always been a pattern for about one in five young women.

In France, about 50 per cent of the men and 60 per cent of the women leave the parental home to enter a first (unmarried or married) union. The others seem to opt for other (non-family) living arrangements. Changes across cohorts are rather small. Toulemon (1994) observed that among the 1950s cohort about 40 per cent of young men and 35 per cent of young women left the parental home in order to live alone. According to Table 6.2, less than 35 per cent of the men and less then 50 per cent of the women in the 1956-60 cohort leave the parental home at the time of marriage. This is for both sexes 14 percentage points less than in the previous birth cohort. The high proportions not (yet) married among the two youngest cohorts make any further comparison difficult. Still, it appears safe to say that nowadays in France leaving the parental home no longer means getting married, nor does it necessarily mean entering a first union. However, the differences in the proportions having left the parental home on the one hand and having entered a union or marriage on the other hand reveal the increasing prevalence of unions that started with unmarried cohabitation, as was mentioned in the introduction. The switch from getting married at the first union to getting married thereafter or not getting married at all, happened between the early and late 1950s cohorts.

Table 6.2 (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in France, by gender and cohort

	Males cohort				Females Cohort			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
Leaving the parental home and first union								
=	55	48	57	59	66	64	65	64
<	41	48	40	38	32	35	34	31
>	4	4	3	3	2	1	1	5
(%)	(91)	(88)	(80)	(54)	(94)	(93)	(86)	(75)
entry labour market								
=	13	19	14	15	19	22	19	21
<	20	16	22	29	26	26	33	35
>	67	65	64	56	55	52	48	44
(%)	(96)	(94)	(90)	(65)	(93)	(89)	(86)	(76)
Marriage and leaving the parental home								
=	47	33	25	34	61	47	42	38
<	2	1	1	3	2	2	0	1
>	51	66	74	63	37	51	58	61
(%)	(83)	(71)	(52)	(17)	(87)	(80)	(60)	(39)
first union								
=	66	51	38	50	77	62	52	42
<	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
>	34	49	62	47	23	38	48	58
(%)	(84)	(72)	(46)	(19)	(88)	(80)	(61)	(40)
First child and first union								
=	14	7	6	12	17	12	4	10
<	3	1	1	7	2	3	3	3
>	83	92	93	81	81	85	93	87
(%)	(80)	(77)	(59)	(16)	(91)	(84)	(66)	(39)
first marriage								
=	22	14	18	8	24	19	12	16
<	8	12	11	24	5	8	10	11
>	70	74	71	68	71	73	78	73
(%)	(76)	(67)	(47)	(10)	(86)	(76)	(54)	(27)

Source: Fertility and Family Survey (1994), INED, Paris

= both events occurred within 6 months of each other
< first event preceded second by more than 6 months
> first event followed second after more than 6 months
(%) total percentage of persons having experienced both events

Galland (1995) has described the desynchronisation of the events in the transition to adulthood among the birth cohorts 1963-66. Girls leave the parental home sooner after the end of education than boys, although both finish school at more or less the same (median) age. Also in our data do we see that boys and girls stop education at about the same time, and that boys live longer in the parental home (Table 6.1). Military service can play a role in this respect, as military service was not considered as a departure in the French FFS. Still, 68 per cent of the cohorts born in 1963-66 fulfilled their military service (Herpin & Mansuy, 1995). Galland found that leaving the parental home among girls is less related to the entry into the labour market than among boys. In our data the opposite can be seen. Galland also observed that boys leave the parental home in general after they have found a job, while girls tend to leave the parental home once they have finished education. Our data confirm this. Boys leave the parental home some 2.5 years after having entered the labour market, girls leave the parental home about 2 years after finishing education.

When do young adults in France start the process of union formation and marriage? For a small proportion of them the birth of a first child coincides (within six months) with the start of a first union, for a larger proportion with marriage. Expecting, or having recently given birth to, a baby is a reason to start living together, but particularly to get married. Most children are born to married parents who live in their first union, and first marriages are rarely formed after the birth of a first child. FFS data on the partnership status at first childbirth confirm this: up to the 1959-63 cohort, less than 8 per cent of all first births occurred to mothers not living in any partnership (Toulemon and de Guibert-Lantoine, 1998). Marriages after the birth of the first child mainly reflect consensual unions that are converted into marriage after the birth of a child. Festy (1994) has described how long it takes for unmarried fathers to recognise legally their child, or to marry the mother of the child. These kinds of data reveal how the entry into parenthood can be split up in a series of social events occurring long after the biological event took place.

6.3.4   Deviations and variations

The postponement trend in the union and family formation process in France is so strong that by age 30 the transition to adulthood is not at all finished. The destandardisation goes far beyond this age. Moreover, marriage seems no longer to be an essential part of the transition to adulthood; the strong postponement suggests that an increasing proportion may never marry. Among the 1945 birth cohort, there were 10 per cent unmarried men

and 8 per cent unmarried women by the age of 50 (Toulemon, 1996). In the FFS data, we observe that among the cohort of the 1950s 24 per cent of the men and 16 per cent of the women are still unmarried by age 35. The question is how strong this cohort will catch up between age 35 and 50. The postponement of first marriage up to age 30 and beyond points to a certain demise of marriage in France. Indeed, the increasing popularity of consensual unions in France has been well documented (Leridon, 1990; Leridon & Villeneuve-Gokalp, 1994; Toulemon, 1997; Villeneuve-Gokalp, 1997).

The same can not yet be concluded with regard to parenthood. The birth cohort of the 1940s showed 11 per cent of childless women at the age of 50 (Toulemon & de Guíbert-Lantoine, 1998). In the FFS data, we observe that among the cohort of the 1950s 11 per cent are childless at age 35. Levels of childlessness thus remained fairly constant across those cohorts.

Remaining in the parental home up to age 30 or later seems to be the preferred option of almost 10 per cent of young French males; staying outside a first union up to age 30 or later seems to be the preferred option of almost 10 per cent of young French females. Thus, as long as they are not in a union, young men tend to stay with their family of origin, whereas young women rather live in a non-family household (alone or with others).

6.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

In this study, the analysis of the determinants of the transition to adulthood is restricted to determinants of the family formation process. Based on the 'Enquête Jeunes', other determinants of the transition to adulthood were already investigated elsewhere. We refer to the work of Moncel and Rose (1995) for results on the specific characteristics of the entry into the labour market and its determinants among the 1963-74 birth cohort. They found that age and job experience are as important as the educational level. Herpin and Mansuy (1995) described for the same cohort the role of the military service for the integration into the labour force. The integration into the labour force immediately after the military service does not seem to be related to the educational opportunities taken during this service. Dumartin (1995) analysed the role of geographical mobility in the transition to adulthood. Between ages 20 to 24, every fifth young adult moves at least once a year. Their mobility is mainly related to union formation, integration into the labour force and improvement of housing conditions, and less to educational reasons. Caussat (1995) focused on the different pathways to financial independence.

Using the FFS data on the 1951-70 cohorts, Table 6.3 presents the relative risks for the determinants of the four events constituting the transition to adulthood, for males and females separately. For lack of other available independent variables, the models are fairly simple. Model 1 includes only one of the main variables of interest in this study, namely, educational attainment. This impact is controlled by age, cohort and one parental background characteristic, i.e. the experience of parental divorce. Model 2 includes additionally the significant interactions of the educational level with age and age squared. The effect of the cohort and educational level did not seem to be linear. For reasons of legibility the relative risks for the two-year age periods are not included in Table 6.3. As information on the end of education was missing for 10 per cent of the sample, in none of the models is there a control for educational enrolment.

6.4.1   Impact of education

The impact of the educational level on the transition to adulthood in France has already been examined in previous studies. For the 1963-66 cohort, Galland (1995) analysed its impact not only on the timing of events, but also on the duration between particular events and their order. Higher educated young adults of this small cohort leave the educational system at a later age, have a shorter interval between the departure from the educational system and the departure from the parental home, and more often leave the parental home before the end of education. They also take more time between leaving the parental home and entering a first union, and more often than not they leave the parental home before starting a union. In contrast, the interval between the first union and the first birth does not vary according to the educational level, which has only a weak impact on the timing of the first birth. The duration of the whole transition period, i.e. between leaving the educational system and having a first child, varies mainly according to the educational level: the period is two times longer for those with lower education than for those with higher education. Gender differences are strongly related to education. The higher the educational level, the more men and women resemble each other in terms of educational and occupational patterns. The lower the educational level, the more men and women have a different familial pattern. Galland also found that the impact of the educational level is age-related.

Leridon and Toulemon (1995) demonstrated for the 1941-69 cohorts of women the strong effect of the educational level on the choice between married and unmarried cohabitation. They found that women with a higher edu-

Table 6.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in France: relative risks

independent variables	Males leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Educational level	1.09**	1.09**	0.97	0.65*	0.90**	0.54*	0.87**	0.53**
Educational level^2		-		0.92**		0.88***		0.87***
Parental divorce	1.30**	1.30**	1.05	1.05	0.72**	0.72**	0.88	0.88
Birth cohort	0.90**	1.79**	0.91**	1.52	0.69**	1.52	0.83**	2.47**
Birth cohort^2		0.90**		0.93*		0.89***		0.85***
Educational level * age		-		1.15**		1.19**		1.17**
Educational level * age^2		-		0.61**		0.59**		0.68**
Number of events		1136		1045		75		77
Log-likelihood	-6118	-6113	-5836	-5811	-4557	-4530	-4648	-4613

Table 6.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in France: relative risks (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Educational level	0.97	0.71**	0.84**	0.52**	0.81**	0.51**	0.72**	0.63**
Educational level²		0.93**		0.84**		0.85**		0.76**
Parental divorce	1.19*	1.19*	1.08	1.11	0.77**	0.78**	1.20*	1.16
Birth cohort	0.94**	1.40*	0.93**	0.94**	0.74**	0.74**	0.82**	0.84**
Cohort²		0.94*		-		-		-
Educational level * age		1.16**		1.34**		1.27**		1.24**
Educational level * age²		0.56**		0.28**		0.44**		0.56**
Number of events	1858		1755		1350		1431	
Log-likelihood	-9496	-9425	-9352	-9215	-7913	-7813	-8315	-8188

* p < .05   ** p < .01
Source: Fertility and Family Survey (1994), INED, Paris.

cation marry less, but cohabit more than women with lower education. As a result, first union intensities do not vary much according to the educational level.

In the FFS data on the 1951-70 cohort, we find that the impact of the educational level on the union and family formation process is - as hypothesised in Chapter 1 - negative. It is, however, not negative in a linear way. The effect is only positive for men leaving the parental home: the higher their educational level, the sooner they leave the parental home, probably because of the dispersion of training institutes.

Moreover, the impact of the educational attainment seems to be age-specific. The impact is generally most negative as long as the young adults experience the event at very young ages. Around the median age there is a range of about 10 to 13 years where some kind of catching up is taking place so that the negative impact of the educational level becomes positive. Only with regard to men's leaving the parental home is the effect is age-related. Model 1 also reveals that the negative effect of education is event-specific; it is strongest for the parenthood timing. The interaction of education with age is event-specific, too, with the catching up around the median age being strongest for the parenthood timing.

6.4.2   Impact of the occupational career

The French FFS data do not allow an analysis of the impact of the occupational career because a full reconstruction of this career was not possible.

Galland (1995), in his study on the 1963-66 cohort, found no impact of any job experience on the timing of the transition to adulthood, although women with some job experience leave the parental home earlier. The experience of unemployment postpones the departure from the parental home as well as the start of a first union, but only among men. Unemployment has no impact whatsoever on the timing of the transition to adulthood of women. Income from other sources or savings may enable them to leave the parental home earlier, presumably in half of the cases to join a partner in a first union. A reduced income, no income at all or limited savings do not prevent young women from starting their transition to adulthood, nor from having a first child.

6.4.3   Impact of other factors

Because it is unlawful in France to collect information on religion, it is not possible to study the impact of *religion* on the transition to adulthood. At the beginning of the 1990s still 71 per cent of the population called themselves Catholic (Wilcox & Jelen, 1993). The increase in unmarried cohabitation started in Europe mainly in non-Catholic countries and, within countries, among non-Catholics (Corijn, 1994). Nonetheless, France experienced a very strong increase in unmarried cohabitation. In empirical studies this increase has generally been linked to education, not ideology.

A parental background factor often analysed in French studies is the *social class or profession of the father*. Galland (1995) observed an impact of the social origin on the educational / occupational career of the young adults of the 1963-66 cohort. This impact is weaker on the union formation process. The timing of the first birth, for instance, does not vary much according to social background. Also Leridon and Toulemon (1995) found that the impact of the social class of the father on the timing of first marriage and parenthood is not that strong. In terms of incidence, however, unmarried cohabitation occurs less in the lower classes, marriage less in the higher classes.

Bozon and Villeneuve-Gokalp (1994) have shown how *the quality of the relationship between the parents and the children* before the departure from the parental home can influence the timing and the kind of tracks in the transition to adulthood. When the relationship was difficult, children leave the parental home and form a first union about one year earlier than otherwise. But daughters from such families marry later. Furthermore, when the parent-child relationships were difficult, the order of some pairs of events is changed: children from such families more often leave the parental home before having a (stable) job and before forming a first union. They also form more often a first union before having a first job. Difficult relations also reduce the financial support in the year of the departure from the parental home and urge youngsters to form sooner a first union. They also increase the time between the end of education and the birth of a first child.

In the data on the 1951-70 cohort, the impact of the experience of *a parental divorce* on the transition to adulthood is gender- and event-specific. Young adults having experienced a divorce of their parents leave the parental home earlier than those who have not. In so far as the experience of a divorce of the parents reflects - in the same way as difficult parent-child relationships do - an unfavourable family climate, these results are congruent with those

of Bozon and Villeneuve-Gokalp (1994). However, according to our data, the experience of a parental divorce does not influence the timing of a first union. This absence can be explained by the fact that first unions over time are a changing mixture of married and unmarried unions. An effect shows up again when one considers first marriages: a parental divorce leads to a clear postponement. In contrast, it leads to earlier first motherhood but has no effect on first fatherhood timing. Some of these results are also congruent with those of Bozon and Villeneuve-Gokalp (1994) on the difficult relationships between parents and children. The experience of a parental divorce apparently stimulates young people to leave the parental home early and to enter a first unmarried union, but it makes them reluctant towards marriage.

Finally, in Model 1 we see that the linear *cohort* effect is negative, in particular for the marriage timing. Indeed, as the descriptive data already showed (Table 6.1), marriage is much stronger postponed than parenthood. In Model 2 we find that for males leaving the parental home the cohort effect is non-linear. But the linear nor the quadratic function describe well the turning point we found in the descriptive data for the timing of leaving the parental home and starting a first union.

6.5 | Discussion and conclusions

In France, the postponement of marriage and parenthood started among the 1950s cohort. The postponement of leaving the parental home and of starting a first union started among the 1960s cohort. From then on, the marriage postponement was no longer completely compensated by consensual unions whose timing was also increasingly delayed.

Leaving the parental home became very strongly disconnected from marriage as well as from any first union start. With in recent years as much as 80 per cent of all first unions being non-marital, marriage has clearly lost its role as couple-binding ritual. Moreover, an increasing share of the population foregoes marriage altogether. As such, marriage also lost its role as entry vehicle into first parenthood, as demonstrated by the fact that more and more parents are unmarried at the birth of their first child. Although parenthood is strongly postponed, there is a catching up in the early thirties: by age 35 still 90 per cent of all women are mother.

The disconnection of the first union from first marriage began with the early 1950s cohort. A decreasing number of unions started as marriage, whereas an increasing number of first marriages was preceded by unmarried cohabi-

tation. At the same time, a growing number of first unions was not followed by marriage at all.

The disconnection of first marriage from first parenthood also commenced with the early 1950s cohort. The percentage of women who were married at first childbirth declined from 87 per cent among the cohort born in 1949-53 to 38 per cent among those born twenty years later. But parenthood is ultimately still the experience of about 90 per cent of all women.

A higher educational level has a negative impact on the transition to adulthood, particularly on early transitions. As such, the negative impact appears only temporary. It is not only age- but also gender- and event-specific. All in all, the impact of education does not seem to be linear.

6.6 | References

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Figure 6.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in France,
inverted survival curves by gender and cohort

Education

First employment

— — — Cohort 1966-70   — · — Cohort 1961-65

· · · · · Cohort 1956-60   ——— Cohort 1951-55

*Figure 6.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in France,
inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

Leaving parental home

First union

— — — Cohort 1966-70   — · · — Cohort 1961-65

· · · · · Cohort 1956-60   ——— Cohort 1951-55

*Figure 6.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in France,
inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

First marriage

First child

- - - Cohort 1966-70   - · - Cohort 1961-65

· · · · · Cohort 1956-60   Cohort 1951-55
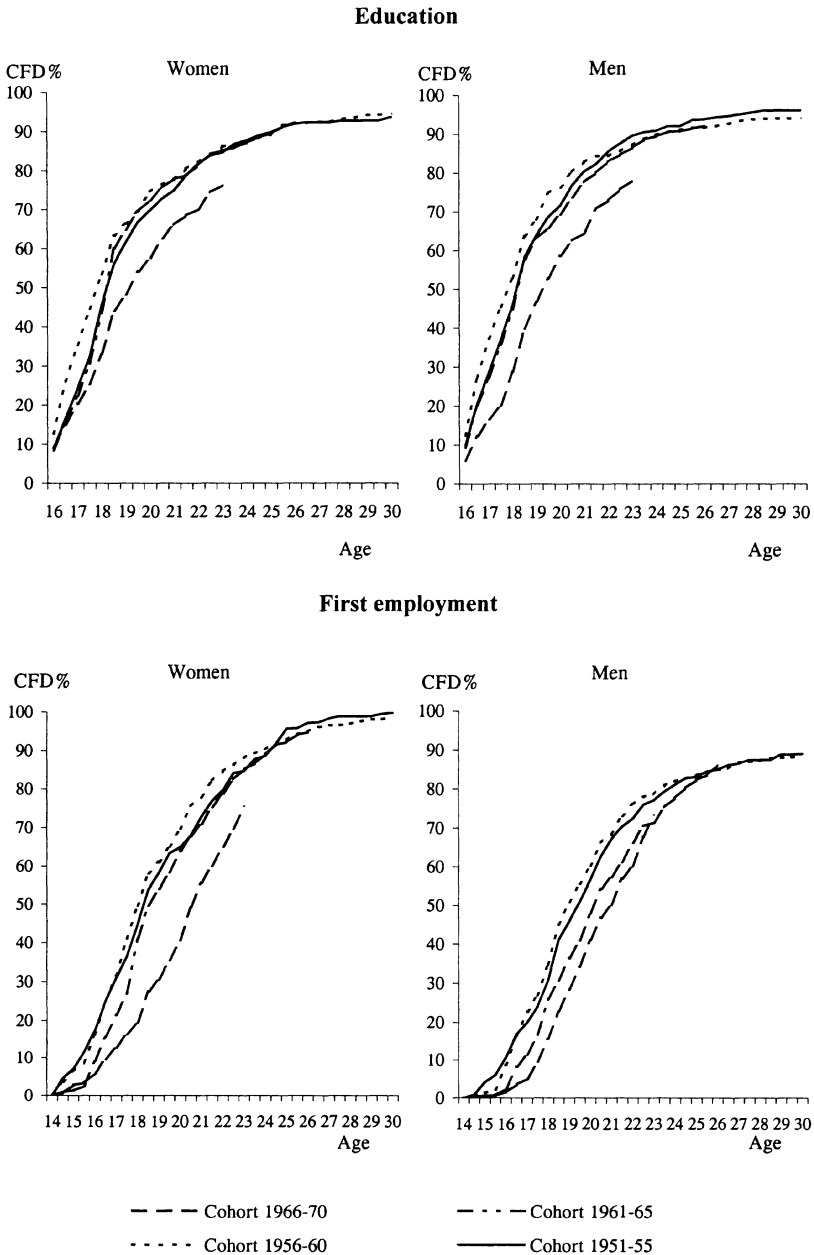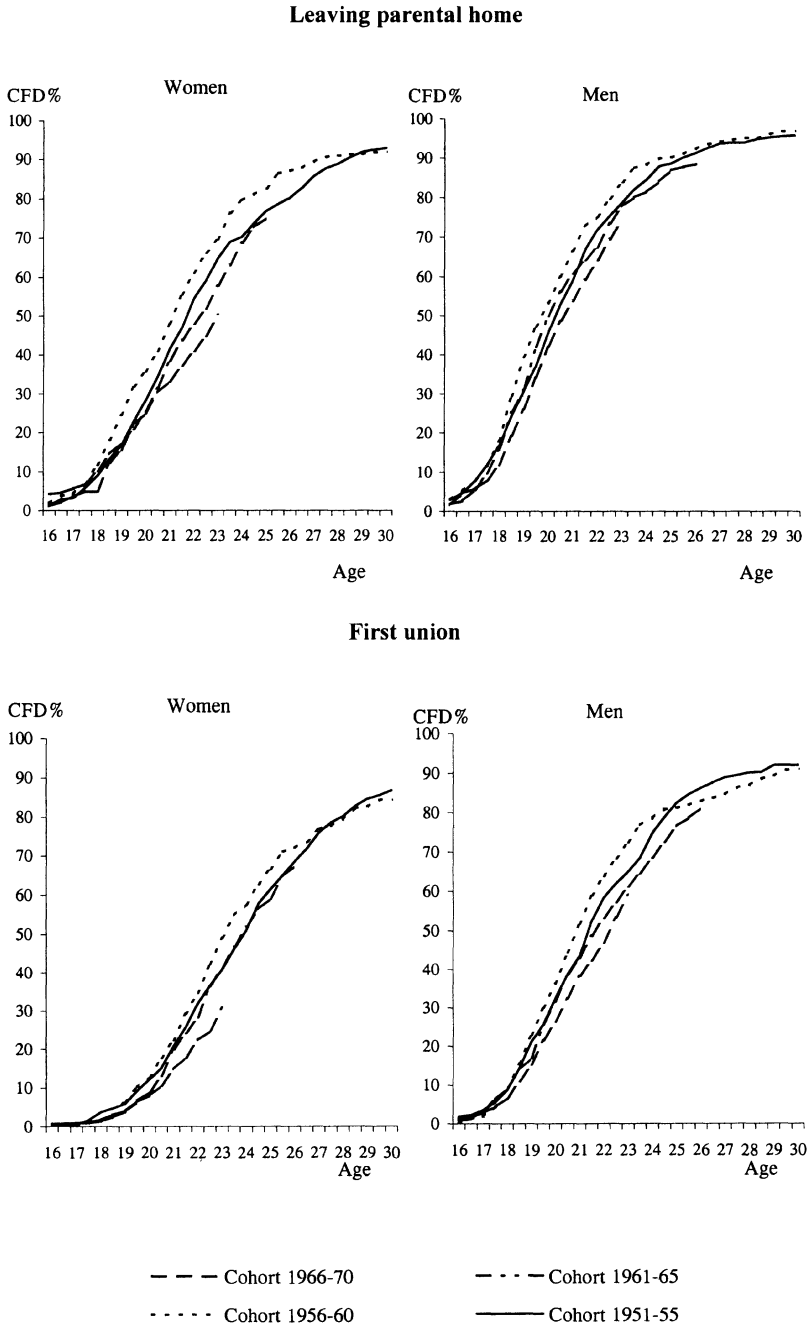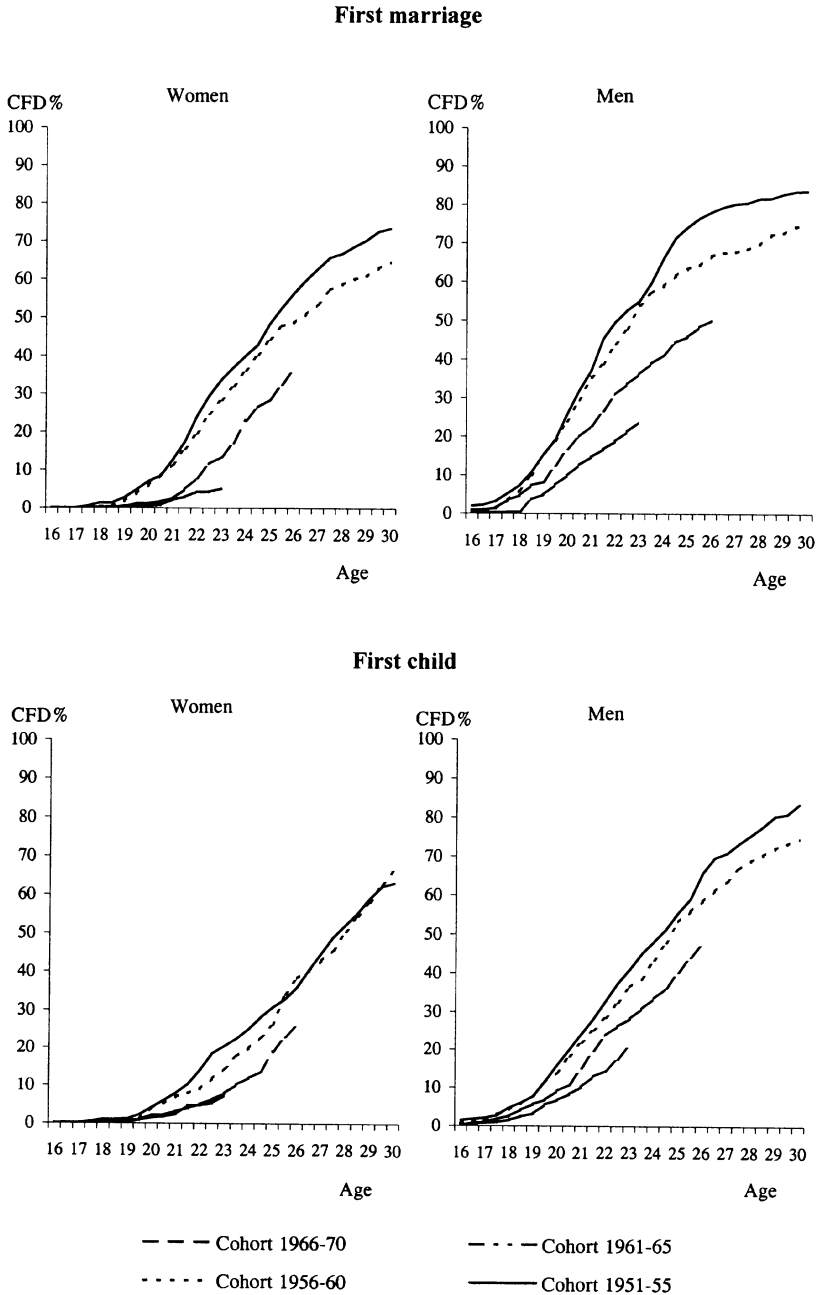
Source: Fertility and Family Survey (1994) INED, Paris

7 TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN GERMANY

GERT HULLEN

7.1 | Introduction

The Cold War led to the formation of two states in Germany in 1949. Their political constitutions were radically different. The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was created as a liberal, pluralistic and democratic state after the pattern of western democracies. The German Democratic Republic (GDR) was a socialistic state based on the autocratic rule of one party. In 1989 the Iron Curtain finally opened and in November of that year the Wall came down. GDR citizens regained their freedom by means of a peaceful revolution. On the 1st of July 1990, Germany's separation ended with the creation of one currency area. The German Mark was introduced as the sole means of payment in the former GDR. The Unification Treaty was signed on the 31st of August 1990 and went into effect on the 3rd of October 1990.

Recalling these unforeseen historic events should remind us that the circumstances surrounding the transition to adulthood in both parts of Germany have been rather different. Children and youngsters in the western and eastern parts of Germany grew up in educational systems that were coined by a joint history but that have been developing in separate ways, except perhaps for the primary schools. The latter offered in both the West and the East an education course of four years which was nearly undifferentiated. The secondary school in West Germany was in general divided into courses of four to six years which led to different certificates giving access to vocational training or further academic education. In contrast, the secondary

school in East Germany - the so-called Polytechnische Oberschule (POS) - consisted of an integrated course until the 10th stage.

In this way, after nine to ten years of school enrolment, most juveniles began vocational training courses, which were given in schools as well as in private firms (apprenticeships) and which, after two to four years, made them skilled workers. The certificates of vocational training were a prerequisite to further vocational training, and in the past decades they also gave more and more access to further academic education. At the age of about 16 years, a growing number of youngsters did not enter the labour market but stayed at school to reach the so-called Abitur, the permission to study. In West Germany this comes after thirteen years of school enrolment, in East Germany mostly after twelve years.

In the western part the number of juveniles with Abitur who went on to study had risen enormously. As a consequence, the time that young people spent at schools and at universities lengthened. Sociologists spoke of an 'educational moratorium' on the transition to the labour market. During the first decades of its existence, the GDR was successful in offering better educational chances. Especially the percentage of pupils who attended school for eight years only, or who had no vocational training, decreased. Since 1971, however, access to universities was not longer widened and possibilities to take part in special correspondence or evening courses were radically reduced. Skilled workers had less chances to study in the 1980s than before. The goal to give vocational training was combined with the principle of 'no more education than economically needed' (Waterkamp 1987, p. 61).

Especially universities and colleges in the GDR had to take into account problems of female students who had already children. In case the mother did not get a place in the kindergarten for her child, she could claim financial support. Further facilities were offered by accommodation nearby the university, child care institutions or by special seminar groups. Thus, the time of studying became for many women the phase to marry and found a family (HIS 1995, p. 24).

Equal rights for men and women as well as the protection of marriage and the family are anchored in the Constitution of the FRG. This has been also the case in the former GDR. However, due to the different systems, these norms took on different legal and political forms. At first it appeared that the GDR wanted to break free of the shared past. The 1950s and 60s in that country were characterised by the integration of as many women as possible

into professional life. But, along the way, ideological and economic objectives became more and more indistinguishable from each other. The demand of classic Marxism that women should gain their freedom within the production process actually became – for lack of workers - an economic necessity. Improved public and company childcare facilities and an expanded service network were supposed to eliminate undesired compromises, such as a possible temporary concentration on family obligations. The 1966 Family Code of the GDR instructed married couples to form their relationship in such a way 'that the woman may combine her professional and social activities with motherhood'. During the same period, the opposite development could be seen to take place in the FRG. Large families and women's role as 'mother and housewife' were propagated.

Over the next two decades a reorientation of policies concerning women and the family could be observed in both German states. In the GDR it became obvious that the gap between political ideals and actual reality grew larger and larger. Up to this time the government had primarily tried to achieve its political aim of full female employment by steadily expanding its childcare facilities. A continuing trend towards part-time employment and declining fertility made it obvious that further measures were necessary. As a consequence, between 1972 and 1986 support for women and family matters steadily increased. The measures included a reduction in the time of employment, additional holidays for full-time employed mothers with at least two children under 16 years of age, paid leave to care for sick children, an increase in the capacity of public childcare centres, extended maternity protection, financial aid at the birth of a child, a paid year's leave if the mother returned to work for the same company, interest-free family formation loans, an increase in child allowances, education grants for all students in extended secondary schools and scholarships for students enrolled at technical colleges and universities. Family support in the GDR therefore achieved a considerable standard.

A comprehensive reform of the laws governing marriage and the family in the FRG went into effect on the 1st of July 1977. At the recommendation of the Federal Constitutional Court, the model of the 'housewife marriage' was abandoned. From July 1979 onward, female employees were granted maternity and education leave during which the Federal Government paid them substitution wages. The economic situation of families improved considerably through allowances for dependent children as well as through supplements to child allowances. The especially difficult situation of single parents was alleviated by making the costs of child-minding tax deductible,

increasing the tax-free allowances and by offering maintenance advance payments as well as special supplements in social aid.

7.2 | Data and methods

The data base of this study is the German Fertility and Family Survey (FFS) of 1992 in which 10,000 persons took part. It deals with partnerships, children, employment, intentions to have children and attitudes towards parenthood and family policies. The FFS offers an extraordinary and distinguished basis for the research of partnership and family formation in East and West Germany over the last four decades. It is possible to compare regions and cohorts as well as the different systems in the East and West. Moreover, the effects of different periods can be analysed, and even the effect of the reunification on demographic behaviour in East Germany can be clarified. A full description of the German FFS has been given by Pohl (1995). An FFS Standard Country Report is forthcoming, to be published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). Hullen (1998) already published results of a longitudinal analysis of life courses in West and East Germany on the basis of FFS data, whereas Roloff and Dorbritz (1999) edited a volume on family formation.

The following analysis is restricted to the birth cohorts from 1956 to 1970 to make sure that the results are comparable with those of the other analyses in this volume. This sub-sample consists of about 1,400 men and 2,100 women aged 22 to 36 years in each of the two parts of Germany, for a total of about 7,000 persons.

7.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

7.3.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood

The timing of the transition to adulthood in West and East Germany is summarised in Table 7.1 and Figure 7.1. Young people in West Germany were increasingly older when *they finished their education*. A look across the cohorts shows that this moment as measured by the median age was postponed from 20 to 22 years. In East Germany people finished their education at a median age of about 19 years, and this value remained fairly constant across the cohorts. An explanation for this might be that the GDR was the only European country to stop the educational expansion by national

means. As mentioned above, access to universities had been reduced in favour of vocational training.

In West Germany the age at which people *left their parental home* increased. There is a remarkable difference of three years between the two sexes: younger women left on average at the age of 22, men at 25. This difference can be explained by the fact that the main reason for moving out is to begin a partnership, with women in general being younger than men when they do so. In East Germany women left the parental home earlier, too. But closer inspection of their cohorts shows that the age at which they as well as men moved out remained constant over the time. This could be caused by the housing conditions in East Germany. Given the lack of flats, young people married and gave birth to a child comparatively early in order to take advantage of the preferential treatment accorded to young families and mothers.

The results in Table 7.1 on the *entry into the labour market* only refer to full-time employment. Part- or short-time jobs are not taken into account. Men and women in West Germany started to work at the age of 19 to 21 years on average, with a clear trend to postpone this. In the eastern part they both started about one year earlier. This is probably the result of their shorter educational enrolment.

Partnerships and families were founded earlier in the East than in the West. Women in the former GDR started a *non-marital relationship* at age 21 or 22, and married at the age of 22 or 23, irrespective of birth cohort. In West Germany, on the other hand, these ages increased from 23 to 25 years, respectively. Similar differences can be observed among men who in West Germany started a partnership two years after their eastern counterparts and who married three or more years later.

Men of the oldest cohort in the West were 32 years old on average (26 in the Eastern part) at the *birth of the first child*. Women of this cohort in West Germany were on average 28 years old, those in the East 22 (see also Hullen, 1998). In East Germany the age at first birth has remained nearly unchanged. Until 1989, no postponement occurred in either the education / occupation or family career.

The inter-quartile ranges Q3-Q1 of all events were greater in West than in East Germany. This indicates less age-relatedness and more diversity of individual biographies in the West, i.e. more possibilities for as well as less security in the transition to adulthood.

Table 7.1a Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in West Germany, by gender and cohort (in years)

	Males cohort			Females cohort		
	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment						
Q1*	19	19	19	18	19	19
Q2	20	21	22	20	20	22
Q3	27	28	-	27	29	-
Q3-Q1	8	9	-	9	10	-
% not at age 25	31	31	35	30	29	36
Entry into labour market						
Q1	16	16	17	16	17	17
Q2	19	19	20	19	19	21
Q3	29	27	-	-	-	-
Q3-Q1	7	11	-	-	-	-
% not at age 25	32	28	34	33	33	42
Leaving the parental home						
Q1	20	20	22	19	19	20
Q2	23	23	25	21	21	22
Q3	27	27	-	24	24	25
Q3-Q1	7	7	-	5	5	5
% not at age 30	18	18	-	9	11	-
First union						
Q1	22	22	24	20	20	21
Q2	25	26	-	23	23	25
Q3	-	-	-	28	27	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	8	7	-
% not at age 30	33	36	-	22	19	-
First marriage						
Q1	24	25	-	21	22	23
Q2	28	30	-	24	25	-
Q3	-	-	-	34	-	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	13	-	-
% not at age 30	43	50	-	29	32	-
First child birth						
Q1	27	28	-	23	24	26
Q2	32	-	-	28	29	-
Q3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	-	-	-
% not at age 30	59	68	-	41	45	-

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Germany (1992), BiB Wiesbaden.
*Q1, Q2 and Q3 are quartiles

Table 7.1b Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in East Germany, by gender and cohort (in years)

	Males cohort			Females cohort		
	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment						
Q1*	19	18	18	18	18	19
Q2	20	19	19	19	19	19
Q3	25	22	21	22	22	22
Q3-Q1	6	4	3	4	4	3
% not at age 25	26	17	14	11	14	16
Entry into labour market						
Q1	17	17	17	17	17	17
Q2	18	18	18	18	19	19
Q3	23	20	23	22	22	24
	6	3	6	5	5	7
% not at age 25	19	16	23	16	18	24
Leaving the parental home						
Q1	20	20	21	20	19	19
Q2	23	23	23	21	21	21
Q3	26	26	27	24	23	23
Q3-Q1	6	6	6	4	4	4
% not at age 30	13	12	-	9	8	-
First union						
Q1	22	22	22	20	20	20
Q2	24	24	24	22	21	22
Q3	27	26	-	24	24	24
Q3-Q1	5	4	-	4	4	4
% not at age 30	15	16	-	10	11	-
First marriage						
Q1	22	23	23	20	20	20
Q2	25	25	-	22	22	23
Q3	30	-	-	25	26	-
Q3-Q1	8	-	-	5	6	-
% not at age 30	24	30	-	15	17	-
First child birth						
Q1	23	23	24	21	20	21
Q2	26	26	-	22	22	23
Q3	-	-	-	26	25	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	5	5	-
% not at age 30	32	35	-	13	14	-

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Germany (1992), BiB Wiesbaden.
*Q1, Q2 and Q3 are quartiles

Looking at the percentages of respondents who had experienced specific biographical events by a given age, some striking changes are noticeable. Table 7.1a shows the lengthening of the education enrolment, the later departure from the parental home, the delay in marriage and the postponement of the first child. For instance, only 50 per cent of West German men born in 1961-65 got married before their 30th birthday. It can be safely assumed that this development is still going on and that younger cohorts are even to a lesser extent married. In East Germany where until 1992, the time of the survey, 70 per cent of the men from the same birth cohort got married before age 30, a sharp decrease of this proportion can also be expected. Among western women, 55 per cent had given birth to a first child by the age of 30. Noteworthy, the corresponding figure for the eastern part was 86 per cent.

7.3.2   Sequences and coincidences of biographic events

Table 7.2 presents the order in which various events in the transition to adulthood have taken place in West and East Germany, respectively. The popular belief that gainful employment always follows after the end of education is not particularly confirmed for the researched generations. Many of them – some 40 per cent - have been full-time employed before reaching their current highest educational degree. Furthermore, one may not ignore the possibility that some respondents will continue their education after the time of interview. In West Germany the pursuit of higher qualifications, worsened chances on the labour market and insufficient university grants forced a growing share of students to look for a job. In the former German Democratic Republic relations between working life and studying were extremely close. Many students were sent to the university by their company. Practical job experiences were to a high extent acquired before reaching the highest level of education. Many respondents had also not yet finished their education when they entered their first non-marital long-term relationship. Approximately 17 to 23 per cent of the women and men in the oldest cohort reported that they reached their highest educational degree after having such a relationship. In East Germany about 20 per cent of the respondents of this cohort had already a child when getting their degree. In the western part the corresponding figure is some 4 times lower.

Positively phrased, longer educational enrolment is the result of the promotion of 'life-long learning', which is seen as the best way to match individual needs with those of society. Early work experiences are important for the personal development. In the future, the education and employment careers are expected to become longer, and closer linked up with each other.

Table 7.2a (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in West Germany, by gender and cohort *

	Males cohort			Females cohort		
	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment and entry labour market						
=	11	11	10	11	11	9
>	43	46	41	40	42	35
first union						
=	1	2	0	3	3	2
>	15	12	6	16	12	8
first child						
=	0	1	1	0	1	1
>	6	4	2	4	4	2
Leaving the parental home and first union						
=	35	33	17	46	47	29
>	3	3	3	3	3	2
entry labour market						
=	4	3	2	4	3	2
>	56	56	33	59	60	42
Marriage and first (non-marital) union						
=	25	18	8	37	27	14
>	34	27	5	28	34	16
First child and first (non-marital) union						
=	1	1	0	1	1	0
>	7	4	1	7	9	3
first marriage						
=	2	2	1	3	3	1
>	43	20	3	49	37	14

Source: Fertility and Family Survey (1992), BiB Wiesbaden

= means occurrence within 5 months,
> means one event follows other at least 3 months after other event

* based on all respondents

*Table 7.2b (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in East Germany,
by gender and cohort ***

	Males cohort			Females cohort		
	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment and						
entry labour market						
=	3	14	12	14	13	13
>	53	50	47	48	47	40
first union						
=	1	2	2	4	4	4
>	23	15	5	17	20	11
first child						
=	2	1	1	4	4	6
>	19	13	5	20	21	10
Leaving the parental home and						
first union						
=	47	42	34	52	51	49
>	4	7	3	7	6	4
entry labour market						
=	4	7	4	6	7	5
>	67	66	52	67	63	59
Marriage and						
first (non-marital) union						
=	31	24	12	30	30	21
>	28	30	13	25	29	22
First child and						
first (non-marital) union						
=	4	2	2	3	5	2
>	15	13	8	18	16	15
first marriage						
=	2	3	0	2	4	2
>	40	28	12	42	36	23

Source: Fertility and Family Survey (1992), BiB Wiesbaden

= means occurrence within 5 months,
> means one event follows other at least 3 months after other event

* based on all respondents

Moving out of the parental home among the older cohorts often coincided with the beginning of a partnership, particularly in East Germany. One-third to one-fourth of them married within five months after starting a non-marital long-term relationship; roughly 30 per cent did so later. Conspicuous is the fact that in the eastern part quite a number of first births occurred within 5 months of the beginning of a non-marital union. Between 16 and 18 per cent of eastern women, born in the period from 1956 to 1965, gave birth to their first child in a non-marital long-term relationship. The corresponding figure for women of the same birth cohorts in West Germany varies between 7 and 9 per cent.

This means that in both parts of Germany, most babies were born in marital relationships. Up to 4 per cent of the couples got married and had a baby within five months (see Blossfeld et al., 1996, for a differential analysis of the effects of pre-marital pregnancies on the tendency to get married). A much greater part became parents at the earliest three months after marrying. Within the oldest cohort this part accounts for 40 to 50 per cent. Within the younger cohorts, childlessness has become more prevalent. Consequently, the percentage of those who became parents within the research period decreased.

7.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

A qualification that gives access to continuous gainful employment is a basic condition for leaving the status of a teenager. But whether this qualification is sufficient depends strongly on the labour market. Even if one manages to enter the labour market, further education may be necessary. The risk to loose one's job has increased over time, and a relapse into economic dependence in younger years happens nowadays more often. Therefore, it is more and more plausible that the foundation of a family is put off until the educational career is finished and some measure of material security from employment has been acquired. Following this theoretical approach, gender differences are unavoidable. In general, the birth of a child determines more the female than the male biography. Having a baby, women are put at risk to loose money, qualifications and prospects of promotion. Female earning chances and high qualifications correlate positively: the higher the education, the higher the profit. Consequently, higher educated women tend to work instead of having a baby.

Caring about the older generation and the transfer of goods and cultural traditions to the next generation are some of the motives that may inspire cou-

ples to have babies, as are common habits and social expectations. Expanding state regulations to support families may have a stimulating effect on this. As long as Germany was divided, there were - in spite of claims for extra family care in both parts - remarkable differences. In the former GDR more women were employed than in the FRG, mothers were ensured of more rights at the workplace, they were privileged in getting a flat, and there was an extensive supply of day care nurseries and kindergartens. All in all, the protection of expectant and nursing mothers was more comprehensive (Wendt, 1997).

The following analyses refer to the events of leaving the parental home, first union, first marriage, and first childbirth. They were carried out separately for men and women in East and West Germany. The features taken into consideration are: living in the eastern or western part, gender, education and employment status. Education was subdivided into four levels: secondary school level I, secondary school level II, (vocational) tertiary school level and university studies. Assuming that it remained relatively unchanged over the individual biography, the highest educational level obtained can be said to represent the respondent's 'educational aspiration'. The variable 'education ended' captures whether the respondent was still - or again - at an educational institution whenever a special event took place. The variable 'employed' checks if someone had a full-time job during the spell under consideration.

More variables could be included in the analyses but their explanatory power was found to be low; they are therefore left out. For instance, religious affiliation seemed to be only important for respondents grown up in small municipalities (for a more extended analysis, see Hullen, 1998).

Table 7.3 contains the relative risks of the pertinent variables ('educational aspiration', 'education ended', 'employed') as well as the constant. These relative risks represent the proportional increase or decrease in the propensity that a person will undergo an event. For example, the relative risk for western women to leave the parental home given their 'educational aspiration' is 0.93. This means that their propensity to leave the parental home decreases by 7 per cent for each increment in education. At the bottom of the table there is information about the number of events, the number of cases and the total person-years until the event or the time of interview, whichever came first. Finally, the difference in the values of the log-likelihood function ('start model' without covariates, 'final model' with covariates) tells us something about the extent to which the covariates contribute to explaining the event in question. An exponential (constant) hazard

Table 7.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Germany: relative risks

independent variables	males							
	leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first child birth	
	West	East	West	East	West	East	West	East
Constant	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***
Educational aspiration	0.99	1.27***	0.98	1.25***	1.01	1.27***	0.94	1.23***
Education ended	8.94***	10.68***	10.16***	14.50***	13.48***	13.69***	14.96***	13.49***
Employed	2.78***	1.36	2.42***	2.44***	2.61***	2.49***	1.68*	2.35***
Number of events	973	1113	734	1083	563	856	561	886
Number of cases	1351	1355	1366	1405	1377	1403	1457	1441
Person Years	6659	7304	7424	8155	8020	8674	8789	9004
LL-Start	-6802	-7600	-5394	-7502	-4319	-6176	-4353	-6395
LL-final	-6265	-6885	-4926	-6597	-3869	-5491	-3896	-5697

Table 7.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood: relative risks in Germany (cont.)

independent variables	Females							
	Leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first child birth	
	West	East	West	East	West	East	West	East
Constant	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***
Educational aspiration	0.93***	1.08**	0.90***	0.97	0.85***	0.98	0.81***	0.97
Education ended	9.20***	13.41***	10.69***	15.45***	13.19***	14.30***	13.33***	19.81***
Employed	0.61	2.09***	2.69***	1.18	2.74***	1.06	1.61	1.33
Number of events	1773	1868	1482	1837	1231	1615	1297	1867
Number of cases	2070	2090	2105	2132	2113	2108	2225	2208
Person Years	9071	10294	10345	13439	11479	11842	13397	12914
LL-Start	-11944	-12477	-10379	-12386	-8924	-11138	-9440	-12666
LL-final	-11063	-11038	-9458	-10814	-8012	-9830	-8503	-10809

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Germany (1992), BiB Wiesbaden.

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

rate model was used because this represents the simplest way to estimate the effects of covariates.

As we have already seen in table 7.1, most respondents *left the parental home* after having finished their education, apparently a precondition for the foundation of an own household for both men and women in the East and in the West. But the educational level has quite different effects: in the western part it increases the age at moving out, in the eastern part the opposite is true. The effect of a full-time job was not uniform either. Results from an in-depth analysis which can not be discussed here, showed that the kind of employment has also an influence on this age (Hullen, 1998, pp. 65-75; Nave-Herz, 1997).

The educational attainment increases the propensity of young people to establish a first non-marital long-term relationship. Whereas this is a fairly common phenomenon, some gender and regional differences are evident. For instance, it did not play a significant role in union building among western men and eastern women. But, as expected, western women with higher levels established their first unions later, while – surprisingly - eastern men earlier. Gainful employment is apparently still a precondition for the foundation of an own household in West Germany, and in East Germany for men but not for women. We will discuss this later.

In the two regions, the end of the educational career and the start of gainful employment were the most important preconditions for *marriage*. A similar pattern was already noticed for the first union. Women in East Germany form again an exception: being employed or not did not influence their tendency to marry. The educational level lowered the female propensity in West Germany by 15 per cent (on a five-point scale) but increased the male propensity in East Germany by 27 per cent. The latter was presumably caused by extra support for students who had their own family.

After the above, the results on the *birth of the first child* will not come as a surprise. For all respondents, a completed educational career was the most important requirement for family foundation. If employed, the propensity to become a father was about twice as high in both the eastern and western part. The educational level has again a differential influence: West German women with a higher level gave birth to their first child later, East German men earlier. The reproductive behaviour of East German women did not seem to be influenced by either their educational level or employment status.

7.5 | Discussion and conclusions

The transition to adulthood in Germany was analysed using the data of the Fertility and Family Survey. Events that mark this transition generally happened earlier for women than for men. This is true for leaving the parental home, starting a relationship, marriage as well as parenthood. Comparing West and East Germany, first marriages and births can be seen to take place earlier in the East. Obviously, this behaviour is connected to welfare state regulations which supported young families and gave them more chances to a flat of their own, to continue studies and to have an agreeable workplace. This assumption is sustained by the turnaround in demographic behaviour after the reunification (and the end of the pronatalistic policy), when the number of marriages and births dropped sharply.

Another reason for earlier marriages and births in East Germany is to be found in the young adult biographies. Especially the educational trajectories had developed quite differently, to the effect that in East Germany secondary school and higher education were finished earlier. In West Germany, however, these careers became ever longer.

The results of the event history analyses have shown that the educational biography has been of great importance for the transition to adulthood. Reaching a specific level of education apparently enlarged the opportunities and the propensity to move out, to have a partner, or to found a family. The educational level itself, here defined as the educational aspiration, has had little or a positive effect - with the exception that western women with a higher level left the parental home later and postponed first unions, marriages, and births. For all respondents except eastern women, it was important to be employed: moving out, starting a relationship, getting married and having a baby all happened to them earlier if they were employed.

It is very important to add a note to the results on the educational biography. It was disregarded whether the dependent events themselves had an effect on the end of the education biography. Still, it is not inconceivable that marriage or the birth of a child force women to leave school or to break off their studies. So, it can not be generalised that the observed sequence of events concerning the educational biography was voluntarily chosen by the individuals.

In general, the lifetime periods of education on the one hand, which for the greater part had taken place whilst the young people were living in the parental household, and the period of family formation on the other, are mutu-

ally exclusive. The main reason for this is that a certain qualification at the end of all education and training is a necessary requirement for forming an own family and household. The importance of specific events of the educational biography for the beginning of adult life has been diminishing across the cohorts investigated. In a growing number of cases the 'end of educational enrolment' no longer preceded, but followed the entry into the labour market, and even the formation of partnerships and families. It is more and more difficult nowadays to draw a clear demarcation line between educational and occupational trajectories. One reason for this is the vocational training system in Germany. The boundary became even less distinct when persons already engaged in economic activity attended educational institutions again, a phenomenon quite frequent in the GDR. Another reason both for the extension of educational periods and for the disappearing boundary between the education and employment system lies in the increasing requirements of further education and training.

7.6 | References

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Figure 7.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood in Germany, inverted survival curves by gender and region

end of educational enrolment

Source: FFS Germany, BiB II5-20/2-FFS-Bru

entry into labour

Source: FFS Germany, BiB II5-20/2-FFS-Bru

Figure 7.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Germany, inverted*
                 survival curves by gender and region (cont.)

leaving the parental home

Source: FFS Germany, BiB II5-20/2-FFS-Bru

first union

Source. FFS Germany, BiB II5-20/2-FFS-Bru
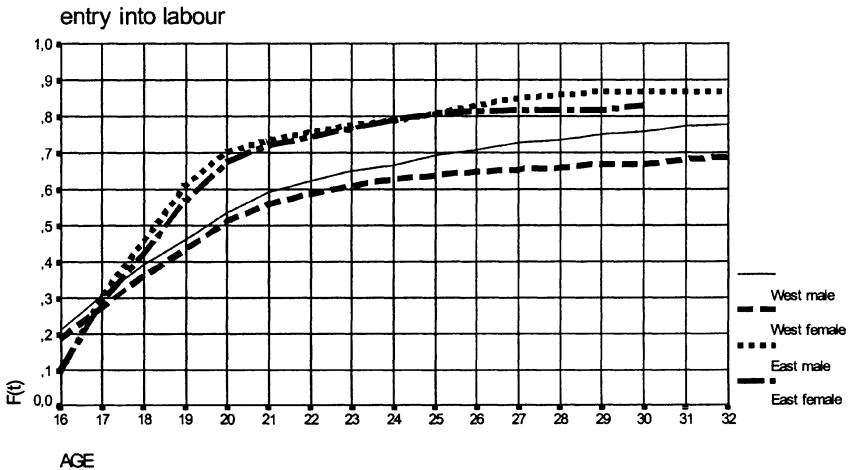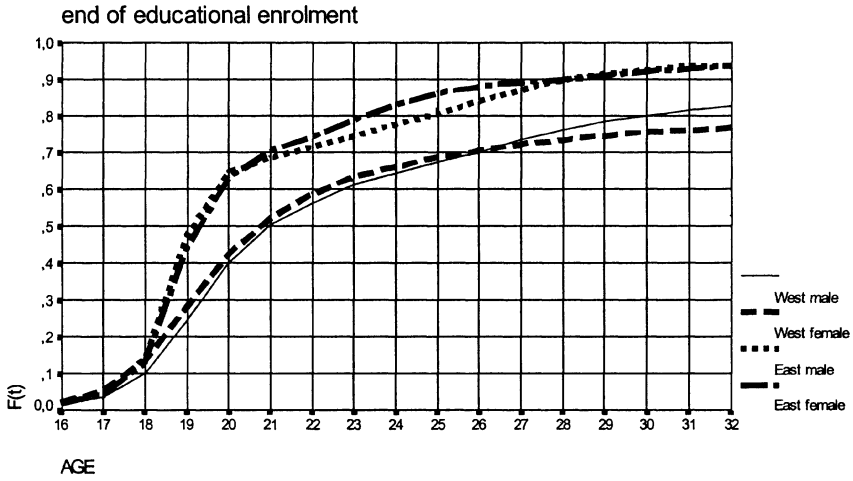
*Figure 7.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood in Germany, inverted
survival curves by gender and region (cont.)*

first marriage

AGE

Source: FFS Germany, BiB II5-20/2-FFS-Bru

first child birth

AGE

Source. FFS Germany, BiB II5-20/2-FFS-Bru
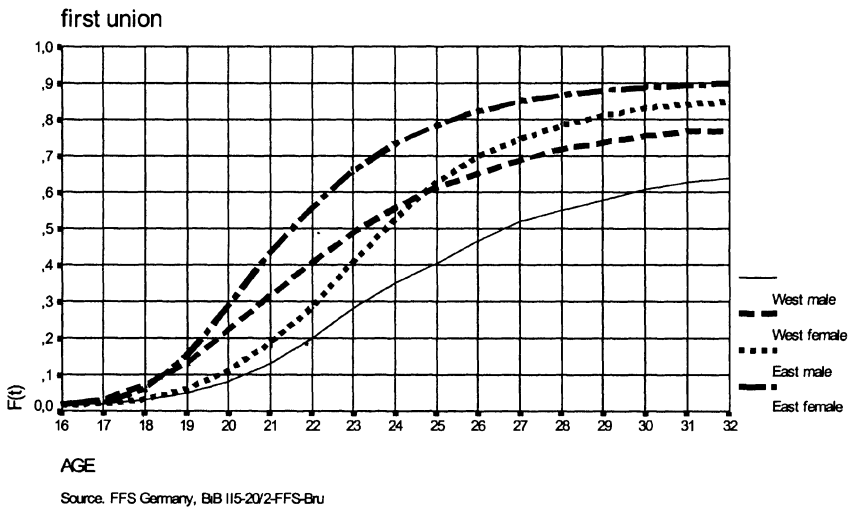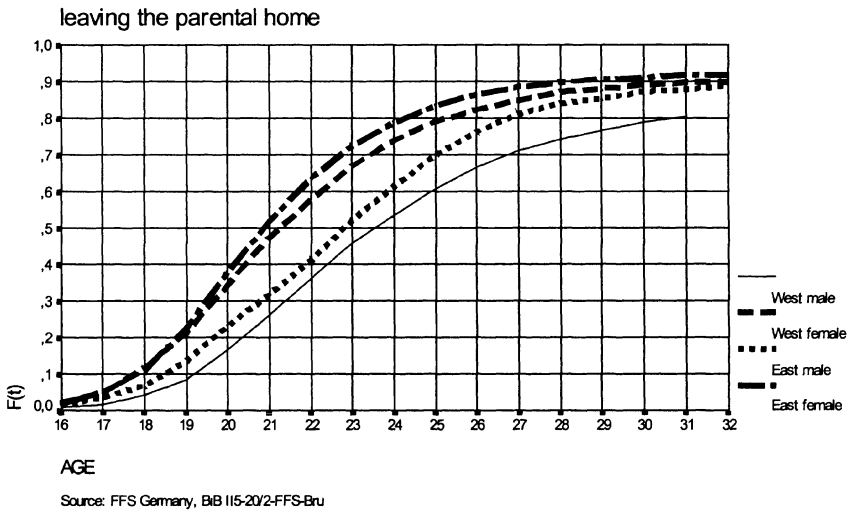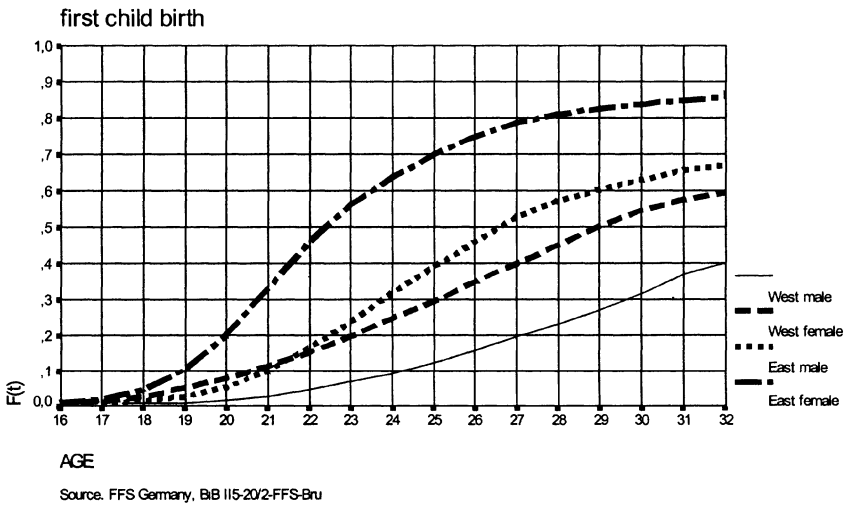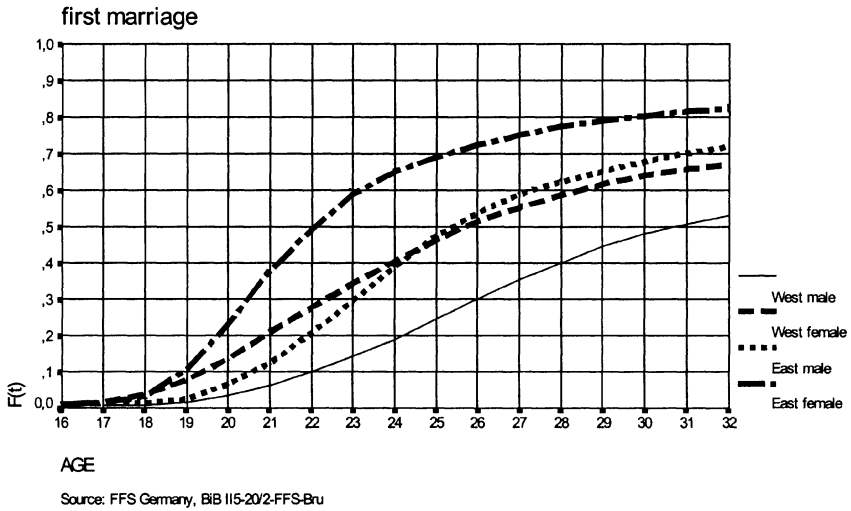
8. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN ITALY

FAUSTA ONGARO

8.1 | Introduction

Over the last forty years Italy has undergone major economic and social changes which have allowed it to quickly overcome its position as a backward country as held at the end of the Second World War. Agriculture, originally the basis of the economic activities (in 1951, 42 per cent of all active men worked in this sector), has gradually been replaced, firstly by industry, then by services (in 1991, 54 per cent of all active men worked in services, while only 8 per cent in agriculture). Living conditions of the population have improved greatly: mortality, particularly infant mortality, has declined to European levels; the proportion of family expenses required for alimentation has been reduced; and building property has been modernised. This improvement in living conditions is partly due to the economic boom of the 1960s and a series of policy measures adopted in the same decade as well as in the 1970s benefiting mainly employed persons and their families. The education level of the population has also considerably improved. In 1962 the age of compulsory education was set at 14 years. In 1969 the criteria for university entrance were widened, and in the following decades the number of university centres multiplied. In 1951 only 5 per cent of men and 3 per cent of women aged over six years had a level of education higher than middle school; corresponding percentages in 1991 had reached 23 and 22 per cent, respectively. At the same time, the number of women in the labour market grew and, in general, their traditional role in society as wife and mother changed.

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Such a development has not, however, been free of problems. Economic growth, which has often been too fast, has sometimes been chaotic and subject to fluctuations creating strong territorial imbalances which have never been corrected (for example, the migration from south to north in the 1960s, the depopulation of the countryside and mountain areas). Even today the country still shows internal heterogeneity which also has repercussions on a social level. Moreover, the employment rate in fact has stagnated throughout the entire second half of the 20st century. In particular female employment figures, although increasing, have remained far below those for men. In 1997 the levels of female activity for the 25-34 and 35-54 age groups equalled 61 and 52 per cent, respectively, against 74 and 71 per cent for men. Finally, family and housework still remain mainly a woman's responsibility. For instance, in a survey of 1995, 72 per cent of women aged 20-49, living in a union, employed and with at least one child under 15 years said they always prepared the meals for their child(ren). Among non-working women in similar situations, this percentage rose to 95 per cent.

Many changes have also taken place in family and reproductive behaviour. The most conspicuous phenomenon is the fall in fertility. Cohort fertility has been subject to a constant decrease, which has brought the average number of children per woman well below the replacement level. The total fertility rate estimated for the 1962 cohort was 1.6, while the rate for the 1920 cohort was 2.5. Period fertility, which in addition is affected by timing variations, presented an even more dramatic reduction. This total fertility rate moved from 2.6 in 1964 to 1.2 in 1996, placing Italy among the countries with the lowest fertility in the world. Changes in the area of family and marriage have been more modest. Over the years the propensity to get married has decreased and the age at first marriage has considerably increased, but on the whole the traditional family model has survived. Unmarried cohabitation, separation and divorce (legal in Italy since 1970) are present and growing, but they have not reached levels of other European countries. In 1991 the percentage of cohabiting couples was less than 2 per cent, and the total divorce rate did not exceed 10 per cent of the marriages. As a result, there are few births out-of-wedlock (7 per cent of all live births in 1995), and non-traditional living arrangements (one-person households, one-parent families, step-families) are rare.

Typically Italian (or perhaps Mediterranean) is, on the other hand, the extended period of time during which young people live with their parents. A relatively high age at first residential autonomy is common in a country where the principal way to achieve this (especially for women) is through marriage, which occurs relatively late. Rather large percentages of young

people who live with their parents until age 20 (for women) or 25 (for men) are, therefore, perfectly in line with tradition. In the last two decades, however, this phenomenon has become more accentuated and has spread into the next two age groups. For example, in the ten-year period from 1983 to 1993, the percentage of men aged 25-29 who still lived with their parents increased from 48 to 64 per cent; for women aged 20-24, this percentage rose from 64 to 78 per cent.

Thus, in Italy today the whole process of the transition to adulthood extends over a much longer period than in the past. At the same time, however, the individualisation and destandardisation as seen in other populations of Continental and Northern Europe (Liefbroer and De Jong, 1994) have not taken root to the same degree. Several studies have been dedicated to this issue, each of them looking at different aspects (De Sandre, 1988; Ongaro, 1990 and 1995; Cavalli, 1993 and 1997; Piccone Stella, 1997; Donati and Colozzi, 1997; Scabini and Cigoli, 1997; Billari, 1998; Billari and Ongaro, 1998). The objective of the current contribution is twofold. First, to give a complete description of the ways in which individuals born in the 1950s and 1960s experienced the most important events in their transition to adulthood (end of full-time education, entry into the labour market, first residential autonomy, first union, first child). Second, for these birth cohorts, to take an in-depth look at the role of some factors in the growing postponement of the three household and family events: first residential autonomy, first union, first child.

It is known that for subsequent cohorts the age at various events has steadily increased for men as well as for women. But, has it increased the same for all events and for both sexes? And, does the phenomenon involve only a shift in the age norm concerning the proper timing of events, or does it also involve a widening of the permissible age range, in other words, a slackening of the age norm? If the latter were true, an element of destandardisation of the process of transition to adulthood could be seen into it. Another question is whether the shift in age is accompanied by a relaxation of the rules concerning the proper sequence and synchronisation of family events. In Italy, leaving the parental home normally occurs at the time of first union formation, which in turn coincides with first marriage, although there are some gender differences in this respect. Moreover, the birth of the first child takes place within marriage. The hypothesis is that, at least for the birth cohorts of the 1950s and 1960s, the changes in the process of transition to adulthood concern mainly the postponement of the various events. But few are the changes expected with respect to the connection between first union and first marriage, as well as with respect to the sequence: from first mar-

riage to first child. However, because of an increase in the percentage of university students, a weakening of the connection between first residential autonomy and first union is to be foreseen.

One may also wonder whether the postponement of the household and family events is above all a function of the late age at which social careers are completed, or whether there are also other factors at work. Two questions are of particular interest here.

Firstly, can the growing investment in education and the increased labour force participation by women be held responsible - directly or indirectly - for the higher age at first residential autonomy, first union formation and first parenthood? Some of the studies cited above found a relationship between the position occupied in the social careers and the risk of leaving the parental home, a relationship that depends on gender and on the reasons for leaving the parental home. It is the intention here to take a closer look at this relationship, examining it more analytically and separately for the three household and family careers. The leading hypotheses are: (i) the increased length of time spent in school delays the process towards autonomy for the young, in particular the formation of unions and acceptance of parental responsibilities; (ii) the increase in individual resources due to the higher level of education has gender-specific effects on the remaining process of the transition to adulthood, i.e., speeding it up for men, slowing it down for women; (iii) considering the difficulties Italian women still face in trying to reconcile work and family, the condition of being employed has similar effects on entering a union and having children as those caused by education level; and (iv) the relationships between social and household or family careers are closer for women than for men.

Secondly, does religiousness have any effect on the timing of the three household and family events? Despite the process of modernisation undergone by the Italian population, catholic moral values are still widely present in individuals' cultural references and in the organisation of society. Nonetheless, over the last few decades, besides the phenomenon of people moving away from religion, other forms of critical reflection or "indifference" towards certain Catholic church precepts on family life have spread. In this chapter it is assumed that religiousness influences the speed with which young people experience the entry into a union and into parenthood. The importance given by Catholics to the family as an institution is therefore expected to delay the entry into a union for two reasons: non-marital cohabitation is not accepted, and marriage is considered a careful choice to be made only if there is relative certainty of success. The importance given by

Catholics to the family as an institution is furthermore expected to acceler-
ate the birth of the first child after marriage.

The process of transition to adulthood will be described in section 3,
whereas section 4 will examine the impact of social careers and religious-
ness on the risks of experiencing first residential autonomy, first union and
the arrival of the first child. In section 2, the data, variables and methods of
analysis will be presented. In the final section the results obtained will be
discussed and tentatively explained.

8.2 | Data and methods

The data used in this study are taken from the National Survey on Fertility
Control and Expectation (INF-2). The survey is part of the international
Fertility and Family Survey (FFS) project supported during the 1990s by the
Population Activities Unit of the United Nations Economic Commission for
Europe (ECE) in Geneva (UN/ECE, 1992). The aim of this project is to
analyse European conjugal and reproductive behaviour in a comparative
manner.

For Italy, this is the second national survey on fertility and the family. The
first (INF-1) was carried out in 1979 under the auspices of the World Fertil-
ity Survey (WFS, 1985) and was based on a sample of married women and
men between the ages of 18 and 44 (De Sandre, 1982). The second survey,
carried out between November 1995 and January 1996, comprises a sample
of 4,824 women and 1,206 men of any marital status between the ages of 20
and 49 (born between 1946 and 1975). To the latter, 602 male partners were
added of women interviewed in the main sample (De Sandre et al., 1997;
2000). The data were gathered through questionnaire-based interviews at the
homes of the respondents. The entire survey was carried out by a group of
researchers from the Universities of Padua, Bologna, Florence and Rome,
from the National Statistical Institute (ISTAT) and from the National Insti-
tute for Population Research. It was financed by ISTAT, the participating
Universities and the Ministry for Scientific Research.

The aim of the survey was to better understand reproductive and family be-
haviour in the Italian population and to clarify the mechanisms leading to
one of the lowest fertility levels in Europe since the 1970s.

The Italian FFS questionnaire reflected most of the content and structure of
the core questionnaire proposed by the UN/ECE, while at the same time it

was adapted to the research needs of contemporary Italian reality as well as to the need for comparability with the previous survey. The Italian FFS has gathered information about many of the events which characterise the transition from adolescence to adulthood: end of education, first entry into the labour market, first sexual intercourse, first departure from the parental home, first (marital or non-marital) union, first child. For each of these events, the date of occurrence was recorded by month and year. Detailed histories were collected on the employment, partnership and parenthood careers. For the end of schooling and the first departure from parental home, only circumstantial information was written down.

The present study examines the transition to adulthood for a subgroup of those interviewed, namely, 3246 women and 807 men born between 1951 and 1970 who at the time of the interview were between the ages of 25 and 44. Six events, of which 2 social (end of full-time education and start of first job) and 4 demographic related to household and family formation (first departure from the parental home, first partnership, first marriage and first child) are chosen as the dependent variables for descriptive analysis. Three of them (first departure from the parental home, first union, first child) are selected for the explanatory analysis.

The descriptive analysis examines the timing of each event and the order in which some pairs of events take place, for men and women of 4 five-year birth cohorts (1951-55, 1956-60, 1961-65, 1966-70). The timing is described using the cumulative failure distribution curve, which is the complement of the survival curve. The curve is calculated using the Kaplan-Meier estimator. The analysis starts at the age of 10 for all events and stops at the age of 35, or at the time of the interview (whichever comes first). Some quantitative measures to summarise the phenomena are also presented: a) first quartile (Q1), second quartile (Q2) or median, and third quartile (Q3), which represent respectively the ages at which 25, 50 and 75 per cent of the respondents had already experienced the event; b) the proportions of respondents who have not yet experienced the event at the ages of 25 or 30.

The sequence of events is examined for six pairs of events: leaving the parental home and first union formation; leaving the parental home and entry into the labour market; marriage and leaving the parental home; marriage and first union formation; first child and first union formation; first child and first marriage. With respect to the first event in each of these pairs, the second can either be: coinciding with it (within six months of each other); preceding it by at least six months; or following it more than six months

later. For the subgroup of respondents who at the time of the interview had already experienced both events in each pair, the distribution of the cases according to this chronological ordering is analysed. To reduce the problem of right censoring, the analysis is limited to events occurring before the age of 30. In this way, at least the three oldest birth cohorts have the same exposure time. The results relative to the most recent cohort (individuals 25-29 years of age) will, however, have to be interpreted with care since they may be biased.

The transition rates to each of the three demographic events chosen for the explanatory analysis are modeled with a piecewise-constant exponential model including covariates (Blossfeld and Rohwer, 1995). In such a model, the dependent variable can vary with time and with different constellations of covariates. Therefore, the risks of undergoing the first departure from the parental home, the first union or the first parenthood result from a combination of two types of parameters. The first is a coefficient associated to time: it is set as a constant for defined periods of time but varying across the periods; the second is a vector of coefficients associated to the individual's specific characteristics. The model is very flexible; both time-constant and time-varying covariates can be used. Time-dependent effects of the independent variables can also be tested. The time axis - in this study represented by the individual's age - is divided into four periods: under 20, 20-24, 25-29, 30 and over.

In addition to age, other variables are presumed to determine the role changes that occur in the transition to adulthood. For each of the three events in question, the independent variables represent: a) conditions of the individual in (social and demographic) careers parallel to the one under study; b) individual characteristics fixed in time (birth cohorts, geographic area of residence during adolescence, religiousness at time of interview); and, c) characteristics of the respondent's parental family (education level of the father, number of children of the mother, dissolution of parents' marriage). The gender effect is taken into account by estimating each model separately for men and women, and by comparing the impact of the covariates on the timing of the events under consideration for both sexes.

The parallel careers are inserted in the models as time-varying covariates. The school and work careers, whose effects are of primary interest in this study, are present in the explanatory analyses of all three demographic events. In these analyses, the school career is observed with two time-dependent covariates representing, respectively, the institutional (being in education or not) and the human capital aspect (level of education). The

working career is inserted in the models as a time-varying covariate indicating the individual's activity status (employed or not) at any given point in time. Additional parallel careers are added to two of the three demographic events, namely: whether or not one had left the parental home at the time of first union formation, and whether or not one was living with a partner at the time of first childbirth. Finally, for some parallel careers, the models also test whether or not their effects on the risk of experiencing the demographic events change with the age of the individual (interaction effects).

The time-constant covariates of the respondents are included in all three models of the transition to household and family events. In contrast to the descriptive part, because of the relatively low numbers of men sampled, the birth cohorts were summarised into two 10-year groups (1951-60 and 1961-70). In this way it is possible, even for the youngest cohort, to estimate the risk of undergoing the events at age 30 or over. The region of residence during adolescence is included among the behavioural determinants to take into account the cultural and structural differences among the geographical areas. The variable 'religiousness' deserves a separate discussion. It expresses the individual's religiousness at the moment of the interview and can, as such, be considered as a proxy for either the supposedly time-invariant religiousness in the family of origin or the time-varying 'religiousness' of the individual thereafter. It is, nevertheless, the only information available on the subject. The variable finally used is the result of a combination of answers to two questions in the Italian FFS questionnaire: one on religious denomination, and the other on the frequency of church attendance. In the end, it is considered that: the most religious are those who regularly attend religious services; the moderately religious are those who declare to be religious but who only occasionally attend services; and, the non-religious are those who affirm that they do not belong to any religion or who, despite affirming that they are religious, almost never attend religious services.

The father's level of education, the number of children born to the mother and the occurrence of a separation or divorce to the marriage of the parents are all chosen to represent the characteristics of the respondent's family of origin. In all three explanatory models they are used as time-constant variables. It is assumed that they are proxies of a combination of the material and cultural resources available to the parental home (De Jong et al., 1991). The father's level of education indicates both the economic resources and the general cultural orientation of the family. The number of children born to the mother expresses both the per capita material resources of the parental family and its general attitude towards procreation. Finally, the marriage

situation can principally be seen as a proxy of family wealth. All these independent variables are categorical, thus enabling to discover non-linear effects on the transition rate.

In the presentation of the results, the coefficient estimates have been converted to their anti-logarithms. Thus, the effect linked to the age groups expresses the risk of undergoing the event by an individual with all the residual covariates equal to the reference category. The effects associated with the categories of the other independent variables represent instead relative risks. They indicate the (percentage) points by which the effect of a certain category on the transition rate is higher or lower than that of the reference category (whose risk is set equal to one). Thus, values greater or lower than unity indicate, respectively, that the risk of undergoing the event by that particular category is much higher or lower than the risk of the reference category. The survival analysis and model fitting were done using TDA (Rohwer, 1997); the analysis of the disconnection between pairs of events using SAS.

8.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

8.3.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood

Table 8.1 and Figure 8.1 show at which ages men and women born between 1951 and 1970 experienced the two social (end of schooling, first job) and the four demographic events (first departure from the parental home, first union, first marriage, first child), all of them considered as landmarks in the process of transition to adulthood.

Across cohorts, the age at *completion of studies* increases and gender differences disappear. Men born in the first half of the 1950s stopped being students at a median age of just under 18; those born in the second half of the 1960s, at a median age of just over 19. Although this particular measure fluctuates across cohorts indicating peculiar behavioural changes, in fifteen years time the age at which men abandon a status distinguished by conditions of dependence has increased by one year and a half. However, the most significant changes relate to women. Those born in 1951-55 end up leaving schooling at a median age of 16 and a half. This is quite young compared to men of the same cohort, but also compared to women born in the same years from other European countries (Corijn 1996; Kowalska, this volume), where men and women this old already show a uniform pattern of behaviour. As regards Italian women born in the second half of the 1960s, a

significant increase of about 3 years in the median age at finishing school is observed. This step forward wipes out previous gender differences and sets the median age at the end of schooling for both men and women at a little over 19 years.

A similar trend is observed in the area of employment. In general, moving from the oldest to the younger cohorts, the age at *first entry into the job market* increases. Men born in the early 1950s begin to work at a median age of 17 and a half, relatively low compared to other European countries (Corijn 1996; Kowalska, this volume). Over a period of 15 years, however, the age at first employment has progressively increased: men of the most recent cohort (1966-70) experience their first form of economic independence at a rather high median age, of slightly over twenty years. The age for women is also being postponed, but more modestly: the median changes from just over 20 years for the 1951-55 cohort to just over 21 for the 1966-70 cohort. In reality, such an evolution must be interpreted taking into account that it is the result of changes in timing and intensity of the participation of women in the job market. The median age for the 1951-55 cohort expresses above all the low female propensity for non-domestic work. With a median age at leaving school of around 16 and a half years, and 37 per cent of them who, at age 25 have never worked, we find ourselves faced with a cohort in which work experience is not general, as shown by the quartiles. The following cohorts, however, show some changes. Women born at the end of the 1960s have slightly more often some work experience, but their higher levels of education keep the age at first job up. As a whole, in the last cohort the gender differences are reduced, however, without altogether disappearing: despite having experienced the same length of schooling, 34 per cent of women compared to 21 per cent of men have never worked at 25 years of age.

In general, young Italians born in the second half of the century take on family responsibilities at rather advanced ages. The oldest cohort members (1951-55) leave the parental home for the first time at well over twenty years of age. The median age for these men and women is 25 and 22, respectively. These ages are nearer to those of countries where independence is traditionally late, such as in Spain or Poland (Baizan, this volume; Kowalska, this volume), than to those of populations with intermediate ages, such as Flanders or Austria (Corijn, 1996; Novak and Pfeiffer, 1998). Subsequent cohorts in Italy display an even greater delay. This phenomenon is considerable for women (those born in the second half of the 1960s leave the parental home at a median age of over 25), but even more so for men

who - according to third quartile figures - put off their first residential autonomy to 30 years or later still.

Similar postponement behaviour can be observed for the remaining family events (Figure 8.1). Over a period of fifteen years, women who experienced their first union and marriage originally at a median age of 22 and a half years, and their first child at about 25, put off all of these events for four or more years. Thus, women of the youngest cohort enter into a first partnership at age 26 and a half, get married at almost 27, and have their first child at age 29 and a half. For men, therefore, who already in the oldest cohort showed a median age of 25 or over before experiencing these events, responsibility for family life is nowadays not taken up until they are well into their 30s. Particularly evident is the postponement of fatherhood among men born in the first half of the 1960s: at the age of 30, only 36 per cent of them had had a child.

8.3.2   Disconnection from age

The relationships that exist between chronological age and the life course events of individuals may give a good indication of some of the rules that govern a society in a particular period of time. The more it is normative, or institutionalised, to experience certain transitions at certain ages, the more the spread of the events along the age axis shortens.

Increases in the age interval within which the events marking the transition to adulthood take place, have been documented for more recent cohorts in several European countries. Such phenomena have been related to the diffusion of new behaviour, which tends to make the various paths to adulthood more individualised and more flexible.

From the values of the inter-quartile range (Q3-Q1) in Table 8.1, it can be seen that for some events Italy has experienced a process of disconnection from age. The link between transition events and age is already rather weak for the oldest cohort (1951-55): most unions and/or marriages are formed over at least a five-year age period. Departures from the family of origin are distributed over a six-year age range, whereas the assumption of parental responsibility is spread over a seven-year age period. Individuals of the oldest cohort have even greater freedom when it comes to leaving education.

Table 8.1 *Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in Italy, by gender and cohort (in years)*

	Males Cohorts				Females Cohorts			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
End of educational enrolment								
Q1*	13.9	15.9	14.9	15.8	12.9	14.2	14.4	15.3
Q2	17.7	19.2	18.5	19.2	16.5	18.1	18.5	19.3
Q3	24.5	25.0	22.7	24.9	21.4	23.8	22.2	25.0
Q3-Q1	10.6	9.1	7.8	9.1	8.5	9.6	7.8	9.7
% not at age 25	21	25	21	25	16	20	19	25
Entry into labour market								
Q1	15.1	15.8	15.9	16.8	16.1	16.8	18.0	18.5
Q2	17.5	18.9	18.9	20.3	20.3	20.1	21.2	21.3
Q3	22.4	23.7	23.1	23.8	34.2	31.3	30.2	29.3
Q3-Q1	7.3	7.9	7.2	7.0	18.1	14.5	12.2	10.8
% not at age 25	17	21	21	21	37	35	36	34
Leaving the parental home								
Q1	22.1	22.1	23.2	24.9	20.1	19.9	20.6	21.5
Q2	24.9	25.7	27.2	-	22.3	23.0	23.9	25.3
Q3	28.7	30.6	32.8	-	25.6	27.4	28.0	-
Q3-Q1	6.6	8.5	9.6	-	5.5	7.5	7.4	-
% not at age 30	17	27	32	-	12	17	20	-
First union								
Q1	23.6	24.2	25.0	27.1	20.5	20.3	21.1	22.7
Q2	25.8	26.6	28.8	-	22.5	23.4	24.2	26.5
Q3	29.1	31.5	-	-	25.7	27.8	28.5	-
Q3-Q1	5.5	7.3	-	-	5.2	7.5	7.4	-
% not at age 30	19	34	44	-	10	17	21	-
First marriage								
Q1	23.8	24.4	25.7	28.0	20.5	20.4	21.3	22.9
Q2	26.2	27.3	29.5	-	22.5	23.6	24.4	26.9
Q3	29.4	32.7	-	-	26.0	28.2	29.6	-
Q3-Q1	5.6	8.3	-	-	5.5	7.8	8.3	-
% not at age 30	21	36	48	-	12	20	24	-
First child birth								
Q1	24.9	26.3	28.0	-	21.6	21.9	23.2	25.3
Q2	29.2	30.6	33.3	-	24.8	25.9	27.2	29.5
Q3	32.2	37.2	-	-	28.5	32.3	32.3	-
Q3-Q1	7.3	10.9	-	-	6.9	10.4	9.1	-
% not at age 30	41	55	64	-	21	32	35	-

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Italy (1995-96).
*Q1, Q2 and Q3 are quartiles

For subsequent cohorts, the connection between demographic events and age is slackening further. The progressive postponement of such events does, therefore, not only denote a change in the "level" norm, but also a lengthening of the period during which society finds it apparently acceptable that young adults experience their first residential autonomy, their first partnership and their first parenthood. The disconnection between events and age can in fact only be documented for the cohorts whose third quartiles can be calculated; for the others, it is only possible to formulate hypotheses. For women spanning fifteen years of individual birth cohorts (1951-65), the inter-quartile range grows by two to three years depending on the type of family event. For men, this increase already occurs within the space of the first ten years of individual birth cohorts. As a result, for women born in the first half of the 1960s, the "right" age for having a first child ranges from 23 to 32 years. For men born in the second half of the 1950s, it varies from 26 to 37 years. It is difficult to imagine what the evolution will be for the more recent cohorts. In respect of some events (first exit from the parents' family, first union), it is already possible to anticipate that the inter-quartile range will continue to expand. In respect of others (first marriage, first child), where the first quartile continues to rise but where the third has already reached threshold values of relatively high ages in the previous cohorts, one could formulate the hypothesis that in the future the opposite will occur.

Compared to other European countries, Italians born in the 1950s and 1960s experience their social events within rather large age intervals. Completing school is extended for both men and women over a period of 8-9 years. In Flanders, the same interval is about 4-5 years (Corijn, 1996). This is most certainly a result of the Italian education system, which allows for a minimum compulsory age of 14 years, while university courses cannot be completed before the age of 23 or 24. The average rise in the age at the end of studies has not, however, modified the age connectedness of this event along the cohorts, at least not as measured by the inter-quartile range.

To examine the disconnection between age and entry into the labour market it is necessary to distinguish between men and women. For men, the increase in the age at first employment does not imply modifications to its "normativity": the inter-quartile range remains fairly constant at a high of seven years. For women, on the other hand, the inter-quartile range decreases from 18 years for the 1951-55 cohort to 11 years for the 1966-70 cohort. As the female employment career evolves towards greater standardisation, the weak link that existed previously between age and first job in the oldest cohort disappears.

8.3.3 Disconnection from each other

The diffusion of individualistic behaviour should not only result in a reduction of the connections between age and event, but also of those between one event and another.

Table 8.2 presents, for selected pairs of events: a) the percentage of men and women in the four cohorts who have experienced both events before the age of 30; and b), for these people, the percentage distribution of the sequences within which the events occurred (coinciding, preceding, following). Because many of the family events are postponed to over age 30, the proportion of those who experience the different pairs of events decreases from the older to the younger cohorts. For men, for example, the percentage of those who got married and had a first child falls from 57 to 11 per cent between the 1951-55 and the 1966-70 cohorts. Two consequences will therefore have to be taken into account when interpreting the results. Firstly, censoring the window of observation at age 30 does not completely resolve the problem of selecting populations with particular behavioural characteristics. Secondly, individuals who have experienced only one of the two events are not considered in the analysis.

Traditionally, in Italy, the transition to adulthood is characterised by a certain rigidity in the sequence of events. Entry into the labour market takes place only after completing (at least pre-university) education; marriage also only after completing education; and, becoming a parent only after getting married. Other events on the other hand are more synchronised. In Italy non-marital cohabitation is still uncommon and most first unions begin with marriage. Another important synchronisation is that between first departure from the parental home and first union formation (Billari and Ongaro, 1998). Almost three-quarters of all first departures from the parental home coincide with first union formation. The few cases of residential autonomy for reasons of work (10 per cent) concern, above all, individuals under 20 years of age, men, and people living in regions with employment problems. Departures for reasons of study do not exceed 9 per cent and refer mostly to the subgroup of university students. Departures for need of independence are still less common (7 per cent) and are experienced by men, individuals over 30 and people resident in urban areas.

The synchronisation between first union and first marriage is well documented. Over 90 per cent of the men and 95 per cent of the women who got married before the age of 30 had not previously lived in a consensual union. Passing from the 1951-55 to the 1961-65 cohort, this phenomenon shows

signs of some relaxation. Getting married after an initial period of non-marital cohabitation in these cohorts rises from 4 to 10 per cent among men, and from 2 to 5 per cent among women. With the 1966-70 birth cohort, the upward trend appears to accelerate, especially among men, but because of the selection risks and the low sample numbers it seems premature to generalise these results to all individuals of this cohort.

All of this has no relevant effects on the connection between first departure from the family of origin and first union formation, and only limited effects on the one between first departure from the family of origin and first marriage. The number of cases of departures coinciding with marriage decreases, but to a visible degree only for men, among whom departing before marriage increases from 18 per cent in the 1951-55 cohort to 21 per cent in the 1961-65 cohort. On the other hand, the number of cases of first departures coinciding with first union formation among men even show a slight increase over the first ten cohorts, from 80 to 82 per cent. Men born in the second half of the 1960s, however, seem to show a more significant change in behaviour: in fact, among them, the proportion of those who left the parental family to enter a first union falls to 70 per cent.

The relationship between first departure and first employment shows some changes. Housing autonomy is normally obtained only after reaching some form of economic independence. This is true for both men and women. For the 1960 cohorts, such a connection - at least among men - slackens and, indeed, the percentage of those who leave the family home while still economically dependent increases (from 16 to 21 per cent). This result could reflect the increase in departures for purposes of studying due to the lengthening of the school career.

Due to the low numbers in the male sample, the connections between first union and first child, and between first marriage and first child, can only be interpreted properly for women. The Italian model of children born within wedlock is well documented. Over 80 per cent of those who experienced both events did so in this order, a percentage that remains mostly stable until the 1961-65 cohort. Weak signs of changes in this family formation model can be noticed for the three oldest cohorts in the increasing proportion of women who become mother before marrying (from 1 to 2 per cent). Women born between 1966 and 1970 appear to show models of behaviour that are a little less traditional but, once again, the unusual characteristics of this group make it impossible to extend such a conclusion to the entire cohort.

Table 8.2   (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in Italy, by gender and cohort

	Males Cohorts				Females Cohorts			
	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70
Leaving the parental home and								
First union								
=	80	82	82	70	89	88	90	89
<	18	18	17	25	10	10	8	10
>	2	-	2	5	2	2	2	1
(%)	(76)	(61)	(54)	(22)	(86)	(79)	(76)	(52)
Entry into labour market								
=	13	11	10	14	8	9	6	11
<	9	9	16	21	16	13	18	13
>	78	80	75	64	76	77	76	76
(%)	(78)	(65)	(64)	(29)	(64)	(60)	(60)	(44)
Marriage and								
Leaving the parental home								
=	81	82	77	65	88	87	88	86
<	1	-	2	3	2	3	2	1
>	18	18	21	32	10	10	11	13
(%)	(75)	(59)	(51)	(18)	(84)	(76)	(73)	(49)
First union								
=	96	95	90	87	99	97	95	94
>	4	5	10	13	1	3	5	6
(%)	(78)	(64)	(52)	(20)	(88)	(80)	(76)	(51)
First child and								
First union								
=	21	20	8	26	17	14	12	16
<	3	2	-	-	1	2	1	1
>	77	78	92	74	82	85	86	82
(%)	(57)	(45)	(36)	(11)	(78)	(67)	(64)	(36)
First marriage								
=	20	20	10	27	18	14	14	17
<	3	2	3	5	1	2	2	3
>	77	78	88	67	81	84	83	80
(%)	(57)	(44)	(35)	(11)	(78)	(66)	(63)	(35)

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Italy (1995-96).

=   per cent having experienced both events within 6 months of each other
<   per cent having experienced first event more than 6 months before second
>   per cent having experienced first event more than 6 months after second
(%) per cent having experienced both events before the age of 30

8.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

Table 8.3 presents the results of the application of a piecewise-constant exponential model with covariates in order to study the determinants of the risk of experiencing, respectively, first residential autonomy, first union formation, and the arrival of a first child. For each of these events, two models are estimated for men and women separately: an extended one (model 1), which considers the effects of all the individual and family covariates described in section 2; and a reduced one (model 2), which is more parsimonious. The latter has been selected calculating repeatedly a statistic for couples of nested models and imposing a statistical significance level of 95 per cent confidence or higher. This statistic is double the difference between the log-likelihoods of the couples of models, and is distributed as Chi-square (with degrees of freedom equal to the difference between the number of parameters in the models).

8.4.1 Impact of the education

The effect of the schooling career can be observed in two ways: the institution aspect, connected to the fact of still being in education or not, and the aspect of human capital as it augments in function of the level of education attained. Such components were considered using two time-dependent categorical covariates which for each individual indicate: i) if education has been completed or not (the reference category); ii) the level of education attained (with completion of middle or primary school as the reference category). The model takes into account the fact that some qualifications are obtained only after a certain age. The introduction of an interaction term for each of these variables with time allows seeing whether their effects vary across age.

Having left school influences the risk of experiencing the household and family career events, but its impact varies in relation to gender and age. For women, the exit from the education system accelerates the transition towards residential independence, married life and parental responsibilities, but less and less so as they grow older. This can be interpreted in two different ways. If the student status is abandoned at a young age, individuals are more likely to invest in family than in social careers. Alternatively, as women get older, the conflict between still being in education and investing in the household and family career lasts only for the first part of their life course. This is particularly clear in the case of first maternity: when over 30 years of age, whether or not the woman is still in education has in fact no effect. Completing studies among men is not always a sufficient condition

Table 8.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Italy: relative risks

	Males					
	leaving parental home		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Age group						
<=19	0.001**	0.001**	0.000**	0.000**	0.000	0.000**
20-24	0.004**	0.004**	0.002**	0.003**	0.000**	0.000**
25-29	0.003**	0.005**	0.003**	0.004**	0.000**	0.000**
30+	0.00**	0.003**	0.001**	0.001**	0.000**	0.000**
*Being student (Base=Yes) * Age*						
No * <=19 years	0.96		2.06	2.07	0.05**	
No * 20-24 years	1.04		1.85**	1.76**	0.87	
No * 25-29 years	1.20		1.91**	1.79**	0.95	
No * 30+ years	3.36*		3.43**	3.86**	1.77	
Level of education (Base=Primary or middle) Age*						
High * 20-24 years	0.71**		0.60**	0.59**	0.42**	0.40**
High * 25-29 years	1.23		0.99	0.97	0.79	0.79
High * 30+ years	1.24		1.25	1.22	1.45*	1.31
University * 25-29 years	2.15**	2.05**	0.87	0.94	0.81	
University * 30+ years	3.62**	2.33**	3.65**	4.26**	1.61	
*Being employed (Base=No)*Age*						
Yes * <=19 years	0.96	0.92	3.52*	3.48*	2.06	
Yes * 20-24 years	1.24	1.37**	1.69**	1.64**	0.97	
Yes * 25-29 years	2.34**	2.33**	2.68**	2.53**	0.91	
Yes * 30+ years	1.48	1.46	2.05*	1.86	0.97	
Religiousness (Base=High)						
Medium	0.99		1.28*	1.26*	0.96	
No religion	0.85		0.83	0.81	0.68**	0.70**

Table 8.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Italy: relative risks (cont.)

independent variables	Males leaving parental home		first union		first parenthood	
	model 1	Model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
*Birth cohort (Base=1951-60) * Age*						
1961-70 * <=19 years	0.79	0.78	0.64	0.61	0.00	0.00
1961-70 * 20-24 years	0.58**	0.56**	0.56**	0.53**	0.49**	0.51**
1961-70 * 25-29 years	0.66**	0.66**	0.59***	0.56**	0.74*	0.77
1961-70 * 30+ years	1.99***	1.79***	0.99	0.93	1.30	1.25
Residence (Base=Centre-North)						
South	1.70**	1.83**	1.13		1.55***	1.59**
Father's level of education (Base=Primary)						
Middle	1.02		0.93		1.07	
High	1.27		1.33		0.81	
University	1.19		1.52		0.50*	
Number of siblings (Base=0)						
1	1.30		0.87		1.85***	1.86**
2 or more	1.39		1.11		1.89***	1.85**
Parental separation/divorce (Base=No)						
Yes	0.90		1.08		1.42	

Table 8.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Italy: relative risks (cont.)

	Males					
	leaving parental home		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Having left parental home (Base=No)						
Yes			1.01			
*Being in union (Base=No) *Age*						
Yes * <=19 years					1014.60**	470.41**
Yes * 20-24 years					231.20**	229.95**
Yes * 25-29 years					128.93**	126.51**
Yes * 30+ years					47.80**	48.62**
Log-likelihood	-2973.49	-2982.83	-2647.27	-2635.39	-1729.58	-1739.64

** significant at p <= .05
* significant at p <= .10

Table 8.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Italy: relative risks (cont.)

	Females					
	leaving parental home		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Age group						
<=19	0.002**	0.002**	0.001**	0.001**	0.000**	0.000**
20-24	0.007**	0.007**	0.006**	0.007**	0.000**	0.000**
25-29	0.005**	0.006**	0.007**	0.007**	0.000**	0.000**
30 +	0.001**	0.002**	0.002**	0.003**	0.000**	0.000**
*Being student (Base=Yes) * Age*						
No * <=19 years	3.13**	3.12**	8.09**	8.46**	1.80**	1.81**
No * 20-24 years	2.39**	2.38**	3.46**	3.52**	1.39**	1.39**
No * 25-29 years	1.68**	1.67**	2.10**	2.14**	1.28*	1.28*
No * 30+ years	1.68*	1.68*	1.86**	1.90**	1.18	1.17
Level of education (Base=Primary or Middle) Age*						
High * 20-24 years	0.71**	0.71**	0.66**	0.63**	0.74**	0.73**
High * 25-29 years	1.18*	1.18*	1.03	0.99	0.84**	0.83**
High * 30+ years	1.73**	1.72**	1.56**	1.50**	1.40**	1.40**
University * 25-29 years	1.76**	1.81**	1.25*	1.18	0.97	0.98
University * 30+ years	2.29**	2.32**	2.04**	1.93**	1.87**	1.89**
*Being employed (Base=No)*Age*						
Yes * <=19 years	0.72**	0.72**	0.66**	0.66**	0.88	0.87
Yes * 20-24 years	0.74**	0.74**	0.71**	0.71**	0.47**	0.48**
Yes * 25-29 years	1.20**	1.20**	1.07	1.07	0.69**	0.69**
Yes * 30+ years	1.03	1.02	0.94	0.94	0.84	0.84
Religiousness (Base=High)						
Medium	1.07		1.12**	1.11**	1.01	1.01
No religion	1.11		1.03	1.03	0.85**	0.85**

Table 8.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Italy: relative risks (cont.)

	Females					
	leaving parental home		first union		first parenthood	
Independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
*Birth-cohort (Base=1951-60) * Age*						
1961-70 * <=19 years	0.70**	0.71**	0.69***	0.68***	0.95	0.95
1961-70 * 20-24 years	0.69***	0.70**	0.64***	0.63***	0.76**	0.75**
1961-70 * 25-29 years	0.84***	0.85*	0.79***	0.78***	0.82**	0.81**
1961-70 * 30+ years	2.43**	2.47**	1.91**	1.90***	1.95**	1.95**
Residence (Base=Centre-North)						
South	0.90**	0.89**	0.85***	0.88***	1.27***	1.27**
Father's level of education (Base=Primary)						
Middle	0.98		0.92		0.96	
High	1.02		0.87		0.96	
University	1.11		1.01		1.08	
Number of siblings (Base=0)						
1	1.19**	1.20**	1.05		1.25**	1.25**
2 or more	1.36**	1.36**	1.15		1.36**	1.37**
Parental separation/divorce (Base=No)						
Yes	1.17		1.08		0.88	

Table 8.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Italy: relative risks (cont.)

independent variables	leaving parental home		first union		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Having left parental home (Base=No)						
Yes			1.17**	1.18**		
*Being in union (Base=No) *Age*						
Yes * <=19 years					293.00**	293.32**
Yes * 20-24 years					123.20**	123.11**
Yes * 25-29 years					68.56**	68.42**
Yes * 30+ years					25.80**	25.94**
Log-likelihood	-3575.73	-13578.87	-13053.28	-13058.06	-9428.44	-9429.39

Source: Fertility and Family Survey in Italy (1995-96).

** significant at p <= .05
* significant at p <= .10

to acquire autonomy and family responsibility more quickly. Keeping constant the other characteristics, the exit from student status favours neither the departure from the parental home nor the transition to paternity, only the entry into a first union. In contrast to women, however, as men get older the effect of this variable on the risk of first union formation increases. At very young ages, completing studies does not speed up the entry into a first union. From twenty years of age on, however, the institutional aspect becomes ever more discriminatory, in the sense that it suggests that men staying in school far beyond this age will be less and less inclined to experience a partnership life.

Also *the level of education* influences the timing of the household and family careers. The role of this variable differs according to age: moving from the youngest to the oldest, the effect of the education level on the risk of experiencing a family event is inverted. In general, up to certain age limits (25 for the departure from the parental home, 30 for the two other events), possession of a higher certificate delays or has no influence on experiencing family events. Beyond these limits, as the level of education increases, autonomy from the family of origin and the creation of a separate family accelerates. This is more evident for men than for women. Once again, it is possible that selection mechanisms not entirely controlled by the covariates affect these results. This could be the case for example with the transition to a first child. However, it can not be excluded that beyond a certain age: a) a higher education qualification (university for men, secondary school for women) promotes greater residential independence; and b), the partner market favours individuals who are able to bring in more human capital.

8.4.2   Impact of the occupational career

Employment has a certain effect on the risk of experiencing the family events, but it is different for men and women.

For men, *having a job* and, therefore, being economically independent speeds up both the departure from the family of origin and the entry into a first union. This effect is, however, concentrated in the age group 20-30: below and above these ages it does not appear to be decisive. Moreover, the employment condition has no effect whatsoever on the chance of becoming a father. But again, this result could depend on the particular composition of the male sample in which individuals living in a union are almost all employed, and almost all of those not in a union do not have children.

For women, *having a job* means that the process of experiencing the family events slows down - at least in certain age groups. For the youngest age groups (under 25 years), having a job reduces the risk of both leaving the parents' family and of entering a union. To a certain extent, therefore, for these women a job is a disincentive to starting a family. After 25 years of age, however, this diminishes and the employment condition gradually loses importance. Being employed also delays the entry into maternity. This appears to be true above all for the 20-30 year olds. If the woman is under 20 or over 30, the employment state has no impact on the risk of having a first child. The reasons for this in the two age groups are obviously different. In the first case (under age 20), it is possible that the type of job younger women are having does not represent an important enough investment to compete with motherhood. In the second case (over age 30), women are probably salvaging the plan to have a child within a life course strategy that foresees an investment in the family career only after having reached a certain security in the working career.

8.4.3   Impact of the religion

As expected, *religiousness* has no effect on the departure from the parental home but only on the entry into a first partnership and on becoming a parent.

Religiousness has a non-linear impact on the union career. Individuals who are "moderately" religious enter into a partnership more quickly, whereas the two extremes (very religious and non-religious) behave similarly, in that they start their first union later. The variable does not, however, have a very strong impact: the risk of entering into union life for moderately religious women is 11 per cent higher than that of very religious women. For moderately religious men the risk is slightly higher (26 per cent), but the coefficient is significant only at the 10 per cent level. Considering that unions include both marriages (the vast majority) and consensual unions, the result is not surprising. Very religious individuals have a very low propensity to enter into a consensual union, and their marriage decision is thought about carefully and at length. Non-religious individuals, being more prone towards unmarried cohabitation first, may show a weaker willingness to get married. Moderately religious individuals emerge therefore as the group where the cultural reasons of avoiding or delaying a union, either formal or consensual, are less strong.

Finally, religiousness also influences the timing of the first child. Keeping constant all other conditions, the fact of being not religious or not practising

delays significantly the timing of first parenthood. With respect to the strongly or moderately religious, the risk decreases by some 15 per cent among women and by some 30 per cent among men. In the future, more in-depth analyses will have to establish to what extent this result depends on the wider acceptance of non-marital (childless) cohabitation within this group of individuals, and/or on a greater preference among them to remain childless when married.

8.4.4   Impact of other factors

The family background, historical context and geographical area are also important determinants of the timing of the first residential autonomy, the first union and the first parenthood. Furthermore, the first of these careers is of relevance to the second, which in turn affects the third.

For instance, *having previously left the parental home* accelerates the entry into a union, but only for women among whom the risk is 18 per cent higher. *Being in a union* is the most important condition for becoming parents. The coefficients are very high for both men and women, thus confirming that births in Italy occur almost exclusively to (married) couples. The estimated risks of having the first child are decreasing with age, which suggests that the few births occurring outside a union are not the result of unwanted pregnancies experienced by young people. Rather, they express a behaviour knowingly chosen by adult individuals.

In general, the material and cultural resources of the family of origin have no or only a weak impact on the timing of the household and family events. The *father's level of education* has no significant influence, whereas the *number of children of the mother* has an impact on the first residential autonomy and on the first union, but only for women. In both cases the risk becomes higher as the number of siblings increases. The results are in line with other findings (Billari, 1998) showing that such components affect above all the timing of the social careers, and therefore only indirectly the household and family careers. The number of children of the mother plays a significant role in the procreative behaviour of both men and women. The more children she has, the earlier they enter into parenthood themselves: the model of fertility thus passes directly from one generation to the next. On the other hand, a *separation or divorce of the parents* has no significant effect on the timing of the transition to adulthood of their children. However, this result may depend on the very low number of dissolutions recorded by the survey.

Geographical differences are also present. Men and women who spent their adolescence in the South become parents sooner than those who lived in the Centre or North of the country. Interactions between gender and region of residence during adolescence are found when the first residential independence and the first entry into a union are modelled. Women of the South have a lower risk of leaving the parental home and entering into a union' than those in the rest of Italy. This probably depends on the higher social control of women in the South. Men from this part of the country leave the parental home sooner than those from other geographical areas. This result is connected to the unemployment problems of the South and the consequent need to leave the family of origin for reasons of work.

A significant and strong *cohort* effect is observed among both men and women for all three demographic events. In general, those born in the 1960s face lower risks of advancing in the household and family careers than those born in the previous decade. The impact of the cohort factor is nonetheless period-specific, and the coefficients usually grow in strength with age. Until the age of 30, individuals born in the 1960s are less inclined to experience all the events compared to those born in the 1950s. An acceleration of the same processes after reaching 30 years of age suggests to a certain extent that these cohorts attempt to make up for time lost. For men this is not always true: the continuing delay in union formation can be interpreted as a sign of giving up on partnership life, while the search for independent living through non-family households goes on.

8.5 | Discussion and conclusions

Over a period of twenty years (birth cohorts 1951-1970), the process of transition to adulthood for young Italians has undergone some modifications. The two social careers evolve towards a homogenisation of the male and female paths. The household and family careers, which among those born at the beginning of the 1950s already began rather late and were spread over a relatively long period of time, emphasise these characteristics. For women, but in particular for men, the first residential independence, the first union and the first parenthood are experienced at progressively older and variable ages. Age norms can therefore to be said to shift upwards, but their normative power becomes less and less, thus leading to increased flexibility in the path towards adulthood.

In Italy this appears to be the only real element in the destandardisation of the transition process. It may be true that as the cohorts get younger, some

connections between events diminish. For instance, there is less synchro-nisation between first union and first marriage, as well as less synchronisa-tion between first residential independence and first union. Also the rule that the family of origin should not be left before the acquisition of economic independence is being relaxed. But these are all phenomena that still only apply to rather small numbers of people. Less traditional behaviour ob-served in the family sphere among those born in the second half of the 1960s cannot be extended a priori to the whole cohort, because of possible selection effects.

The school and employment careers have an impact on the timing of the entry into the household and family careers of an individual. For women, investing in education in fact means postponing the timing of the first residential autonomy or the formation of a family until some later age. A higher qualification "protects" the female population from investments in family life through a status (being a student) as well as a level component (cultural differences). These only operate within a certain period. In fact, their effect lessens or indeed is inverted for women over 30 years of age, suggesting that an improvement in the level of education obtained in the previous ten years influences the timing but not the ultimate intensity with which women enter a family career. The occupational career appears to have a similar effect: employed women put off founding their own family to a later age. For men, entry into family careers is less related to advances in the social careers. Firstly, they can count on a wider range of reasons for depar-ting from the family of origin. Secondly, family responsibilities are assumed above all, when certain conditions of reliability - including economic ones - are being met. These conditions become more and more important with age. Therefore, the changes in the participation in education and the labour mar-ket occurring over the last thirty years in Italy have contributed, directly or indirectly, to delaying the entry of young people into household and family careers, but their impact is more complex than expected. Moreover, the gen-der differences that traditionally characterised the transition to adulthood do not seem to have disappeared. Women in particular, although more involved in personal fulfilment through roles outside the family, do not give up be-coming wives and mothers. In order to conciliate such projects, they adopt a strategy of partial separation of the two types of investment. This allows them to start a family only after having reached a sufficiently solid position in the social careers.

The evolution of the timing of the demographic careers over the cohorts does not only depend on the progressive delay in young Italians' experience of the social events. Being in a union and having many siblings are impor-

tant accelerators of the entry into parenthood. The increasing delay of union life and the shrinking family size over the consecutive cohorts of Italian mothers may thus represent added factors delaying the entry into parenthood for more recent cohorts. Religiousness plays a certain role in the individual's family behaviour and, as expected, being very religious slows down the entry into the first union but accelerates the first parenthood. Finally, there remains a cohort effect that suggests an increasing propensity among the individuals born during the 1960s to delay all household and family events, at least as long as they are 20 to 30 years old.

How can these results be interpreted in the light of the cultural and institutional Italian context? A convergence of three factors is of relevance here: the attitude of young cohorts towards life in general; the type of organisation of Italian society; and, the behaviour of the families of origin.

Those born in the second half of the century share the idea of self-fulfilment and the need to choose their own future without passively accepting socially determined destinies. This phenomenon can be observed in all industrialised countries. Young people are slow to accept definitive choices that can limit their further life course and, while waiting to find solutions that best meet their (often high) expectations, they stop to make binding choices before the multitude of real or fictitious opportunities offered by society.

Faced with this, Italian society proposes social and demographic careers that offer only a limited number of states, with very few "grey" zones in-between; to reach them or to live through them requires a considerable investment of resources by the individual. Moving along these careers means to enter onto a rigid path, which in practice discourages any changes in direction or re-entry into previous states. For instance, higher education implies long and full-time study cycles that are difficult to reconcile with investments in other projects. In contrast to what occurs in many other countries, university enrolment in Italy is not always an opportunity to experience first independent living. Recent developments in the organisation of university studies (raising tuition fees, increasing numbers of institutions across the territory) will probably further reduce the proportion of those who leave the parental home because of study. The absence of a substantial market for houses to rent and the financial charges incurred when buying or selling property obstruct the attainment of residential autonomy at a young age. Changes along the employment career are also difficult. Apart from the general problems of unemployment, it is not easy for those without a job to enter the labour market. This is true both for young people who have just finished their education and for individuals who have temporarily inter-

rupted a professional activity to dedicate time to their family. Almost all jobs are full-time, and only recently have attempts been made to introduce part-time work. Demanding is also the decision to start a family. Becoming a parent radically modifies a person's life. This is true everywhere but perhaps in particular for Italian women, who are confronted with a service system that does not readily take into consideration the problems of a mother, and certainly not those of a working mother. In Italy, however, entering into a union is also a very significant event that young people may prefer to put off to a later age. The family is an important institution in Italian society and any form of its weakening spreads with difficulty. Marriage, even if only celebrated with a non-religious ceremony, remains the main form of union life at all ages. Divorce is still limited, and only in 1987 did the period of separation necessary to obtain a divorce drop from five to three years. Non-marital cohabitation, discouraged also by the obligations imposed by the real estate market, is not widespread. It has already been remarked that more religious people experience their first partnership later than the less religious, which was interpreted as a sign that prospective couples realise the importance of the decision to be made. Such a perception is, however, also present among other groups of the population and shows no signs of retreat among the younger cohorts (Bonifazi et al., 1998). In spite of the growing secularisation of society, catholic values continue to exist within the community. Considering the low fertility levels of the country, if there is any area in which Catholic ethics still influence individual behaviour, it is probably that of the couple formation and dissolution.

Such structural and cultural constraints obviously promote the adoption of prudent behaviour that may result in immobility as young people get increasingly worried about binding their future with choices that are difficult to reverse.

Also the parental families are to a certain extent responsible for the increasing delay in the transition to adulthood of the more recent cohorts. Over the cohorts, continued living with the parents has become ever more competitive and attractive compared to other forms of living arrangements available to the young population. All the empirical surveys carried out in the 1990s confirm that young adults resident at the parental home enjoy sufficient liberty to organise themselves and live their lives while taking advantage of the services the family offers. The family atmosphere is favourable to the physical and emotional needs of the young; there is communication, and little conflict with the older generation. Young people, although aware of the advantages of more autonomy, recognise these benefits and appreciate the fact that this solution allows them to avoid making decisions in uncertain condi-

tions and to accumulate resources in order to plan for a future that lives up as much as possible to their expectations. In short, the family leaves the children free but not alone, and both parties are relatively satisfied.

In Italy, the family of origin continues to play an important role in the care and development of individuals. It tends to slow down the process of transition of young people into adulthood, thus guaranteeing them the possibility to spend more time in pretransitional and intermediate states. This phenomenon has been studied, above all, by psycho-sociologists and family psychologists, and the relative absence of conflict between the generations has been interpreted by some as a sign of uneasiness in society (Donati and Colozzi, 1997; Scabini and Cigoli, 1997). Actually, the families of origin of young adults have also undergone important changes over the last few decades. In particular the middle and advanced stages in the life course of such families have undergone considerable variations. These demographic stages have perhaps not been studied in sufficient detail. At which time does the family of origin begin to shrink? How long does this last? And how is the empty nest phase coped with?

One thing appears sure: the families of origin of young people born in the 1960s have lived through a particular historical junction during which the traditional mode of looking after children could all of a sudden be performed under more favourable living conditions. The mother role was decisive in this respect. This role concerns in particular women born before the Second World War, who carried out their functions still within traditional models and family contexts. That is, marriages were rarely dissolved, and the main female role was that of wife and mother. But the important point is that, in contrast to their own mothers, they were able to do so with greater economic and personal resources at their disposal. They had fewer children themselves, and some domestic chores had already been automated. All these factors permitted them to dedicate more care for the upbringing of their children, and to (feel the need to) continue helping them once adulthood was reached.

Predictions for the future are not simple. There is always the unknown factor of how a country's economy will evolve. But the data on the behaviour of those born in the 1970s suggest a further slowing down of the process of transition to adulthood. There are several signs that the individualisation of their paths is indeed slowly increasing. Informal unions, even if currently only moderately prevalent and most of them without children, are still on the increase. And so is their social acceptance: in 1983, women who preferred non-marital over marital cohabitation represented 11 per cent; in

1997, this was more than 20 per cent. On the other hand, union dissolution and female labour force participation are increasing. Thus, eventually, families of origin could end up losing those conditions that favoured and permitted an extended stay of their adult children. The social and economic policies and the institutional transformations that are being discussed at present could also accelerate the process. A reorganisation of the school system, new regulations for housing and youth employment, and new policies aimed at the family could introduce greater flexibility and, together with a greater trust in the future, ease the current rigidity in the behaviour of the young cohorts.

8.6 | References

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Figure 8.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in Italy, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort

Figure 8.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in Italy, inverted survival
curves by gender and cohort (cont.)

Departure from the parental home.
Males

1951-55   1956-60
1961-65   1966-70

Departure from the parental home.
Females

1951-55   1956-60
1961-65   1966-70

First union.
Males

1951-55   1956-60
1961-65   1966-70

First union.
Females

1951-55   1956-60
1961-65   1966-70
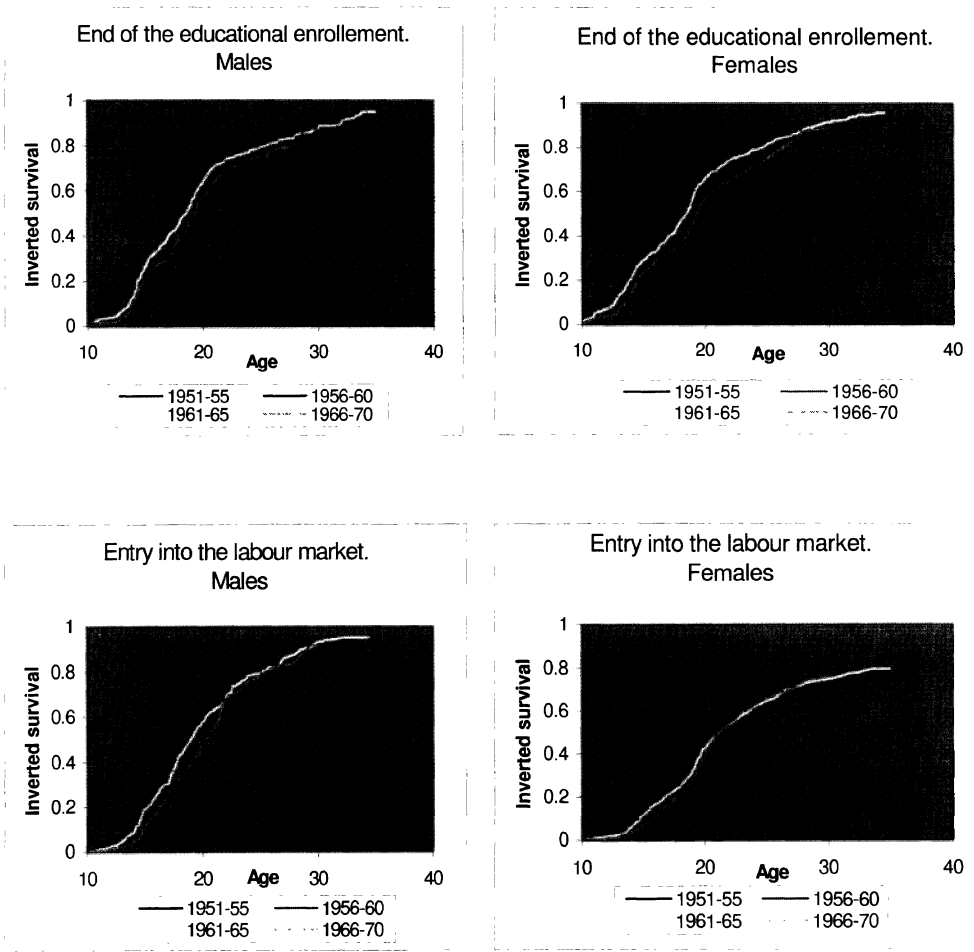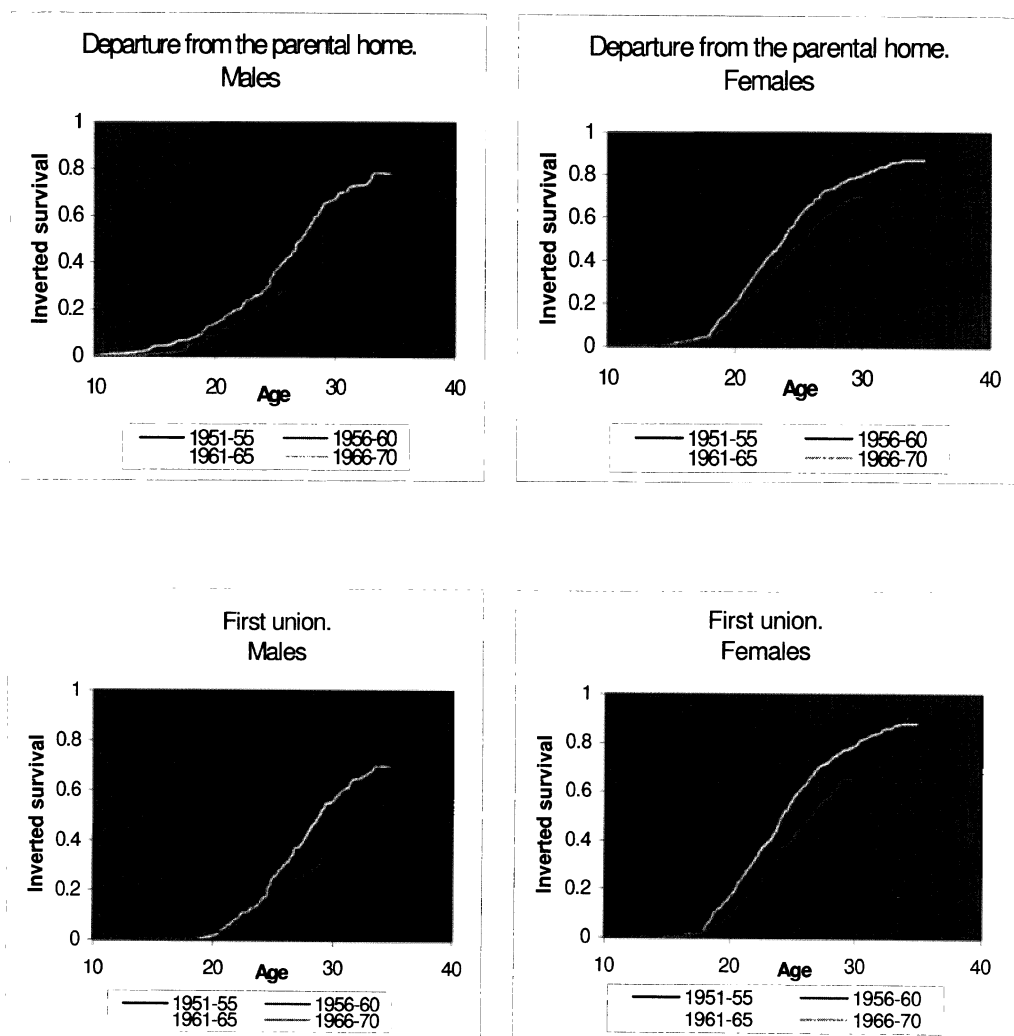
Figure 8.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Italy, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*
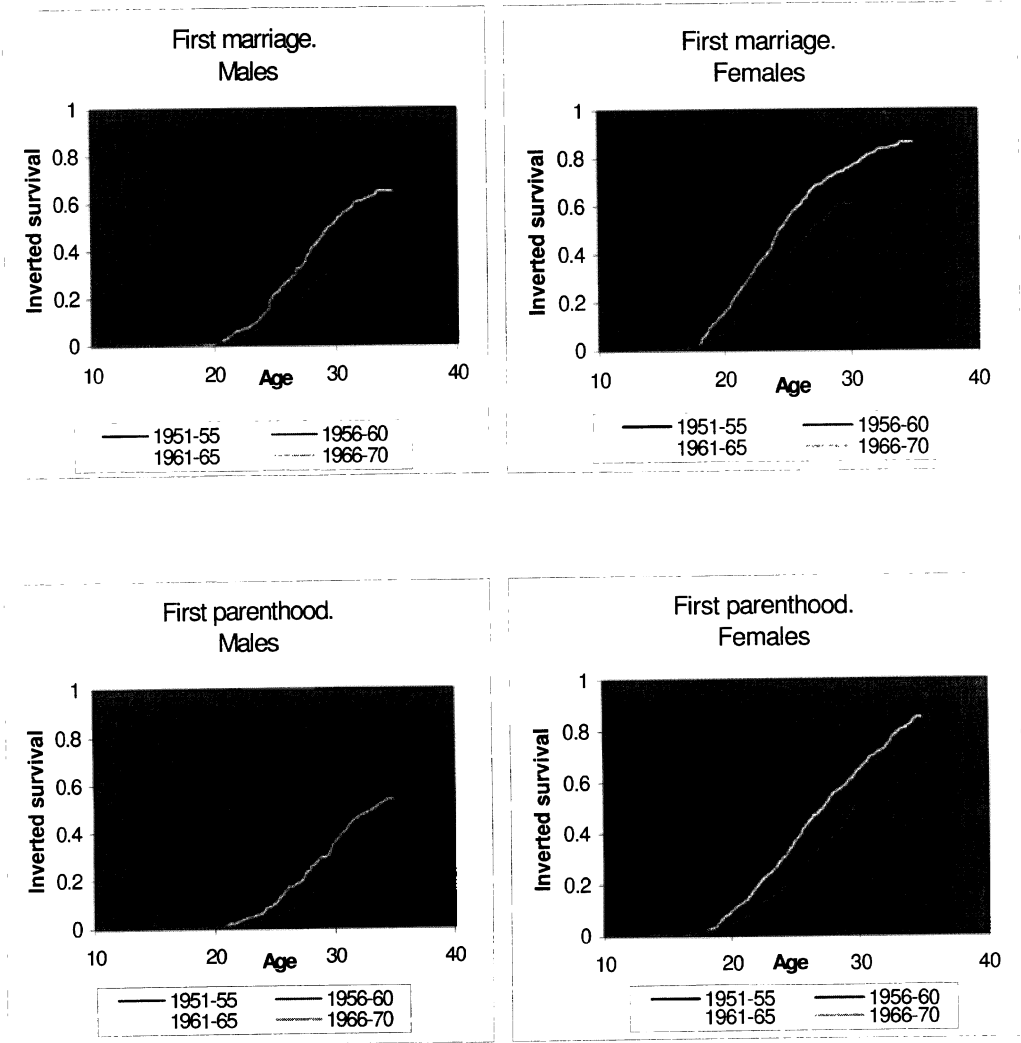
9. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN THE NETHERLANDS

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9.1 | Introduction

The 'modernisation' of the demographic pattern in the Netherlands has been particularly rapid. In the early 1960s the birth rate in the Netherlands was among the highest in Western Europe and its decline occurred somewhat later than in most surrounding countries. Two decades later, showing high rates of unmarried cohabitation and single living but low rates of fertility and marriage, the Netherlands was among the forerunners in what has been labelled as the 'Second Demographic Transition' (Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa, 1986). The expansion of the educational system and the rapid pace of secularisation of Dutch society have been mentioned as prime factors in this development (Kalmijn, 1994; Becker & Vink, 1994).

The changes in the timing of family life events in the transition to adulthood that accompanied this modernisation have been well-documented for co-

horts born during the 1940s and 1950s (Iedema, Sanders and Becker, 1997; Liefbroer and De Jong Gierveld, 1995; Manting, Kuijsten and Helleman, 1992). However, for cohorts born during the 1960s much less information was available, until recently. Therefore, the first aim of this chapter is to describe the life course transitions of young adults born during the 1960s who came of age during the 1980s and 1990s. We focus on four family life transitions, namely, leaving the parental home, starting a first union, entering a first marriage, and the birth of the first child. In addition, some attention is paid to the simultaneity of some of these family life events in the transition from youth to adulthood.

The second aim of the chapter is to explain differences in the timing of family life transitions. In particular, the impact of educational attainment, educational participation, and ideological affiliation on the timing of life course transitions is studied. To some extent, this study builds on earlier work investigating the impact of educational attainment and participation (Liefbroer and Corijn, 1999; Manting, 1994), or religiosity (Corijn, Liefbroer and De Jong Gierveld, 1996), on family formation events. However, we expand on these earlier studies in a number of ways. With regard to educational participation, a distinction is made between full-time and part-time enrolment; this distinction allows for a more in-depth analysis of the impact of educational participation on the timing of family life events. With regard to religiosity, a major drawback of earlier studies has been that it was usually measured *after* the transition to adulthood had been completed. Or one relied on the religious background of the parents. In a society that is secularising at a rapid pace, both these approaches have major shortcomings. In this study, therefore, we use panel data in which religiosity has been measured *before* family life events occur. This allows for a more reliable assessment of its impact on the transition to adulthood.

First, we will briefly introduce the data set used for this chapter, followed by a description of the main trends in the timing of family life events for cohorts born in the 1960s. In the second part, the focus will be on the explanation of the differences in timing of these transitions. Some hypotheses will be formulated on the impact of educational attainment, educational enrolment and religiosity. Next, the operationalisation of these concepts and their methodology will be discussed, followed by the presentation of the results. Finally, the implications of the main findings will be indicated.

9.2 | Data and methods

Our data come from the Panel Study on Social Integration in the Netherlands (PSIN). This panel survey was originally initiated by the Department of Organisational Psychology and the Department of Social Research Methodology of the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, and later continued by the Department of Sociology of the University of Utrecht. In 1987, 1775 young adults born in 1961, 1965 and 1969 were interviewed. The second wave of data collection took place in 1989. This was a short mail questionnaire, which main purpose was to up-date the life courses of the participants between 1987 and 1989. A third wave of interviews was held in 1991, and the last in 1995. At the time of the first wave, in 1987, the respondents were approximately 18, 22, and 26 years old. At the time of the last wave, in 1995, they were approximately 26, 30 and 34 years of age. In 1987, respondents were selected by taking random samples, stratified by sex and year of birth, from the population registers of 25 municipalities in the Netherlands. These municipalities formed a random sample of all Dutch municipalities, stratified by degree of urbanisation and region. The response rate of sample members was 63 per cent. Of the respondents of the first round, 54 per cent (N=962) were re-interviewed in 1995 (Liefbroer & Kalmijn, 1997).

To describe the process of entry into adulthood, life tables were calculated for each of the family life transitions of interest. The basic idea of the life table is to subdivide the period of observation after a given starting point into small time intervals. For each interval, all persons who have not yet experienced an event are used to calculate the probability of an event occurring in that interval. The probabilities estimated for each of the intervals are then used to estimate the overall probability of the event occurring before different time points. All our life tables start at 15 years of age, and the time interval is set at 12 months. The cumulative proportion experiencing the event before a certain age is graphically displayed. Wilcoxon tests are performed to ascertain whether or not the survival curves for consecutive cohorts differ from each other. In addition, the extent to which events in the transition to adulthood occur simultaneously is calculated.

9.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

In this part we give an overview of how the transition to adulthood nowadays takes place in the Netherlands. We focus on the timing of four different demographic life events: leaving the parental home, starting the first union,

entering the first marriage and the birth of the first child. Additionally, we briefly discuss the extent to which these events occur simultaneously.

Figure 9.1 presents the cumulative percentages at successive ages of young adults who have, respectively, left the parental home, started a first relationship, entered a first marriage and experienced the birth of the first child. The survival curves are displayed for men and women separately, from all three birth cohorts (1961, 1965, 1969).

In Table 9.1, the ages at which 25, 50 and 75 per cent of young adults have experienced the above mentioned events are presented. We also include, where applicable, the inter-quartile range (Q3-Q1), as well as the ages at completion of full-time education and entry into the labour market. In addition, the percentage of young adults who have not yet experienced an event at age 30 is shown for the birth cohorts of 1961 and 1965 (the 1969 birth cohort had not yet reached the age of 30 during the last wave of interviews). The quartiles and percentages are again displayed for men and women separately.

The first panel of Table 9.1 shows the age at which young adults born in the 1960s *leave the educational system*. Respondents have been defined as leaving the educational system if they have stopped being full-time enrolled and have not started a new full-time education within the next year. The age at which young adults end their education shows a marked increase from one cohort to the other. This is true for both men and women. Respondents born at the end of the 1960s leave the educational system between two and two and a half years later than cohorts born at the beginning of that decade. However, the spread (Q3-Q1) is also increasing, suggesting greater individual variability.

The second panel of Table 9.1 demonstrates that the age of *entry into the labour market* has also increased among young adults born in the 1960s. Respondents have been defined as entering the labour market if they have held a job of at least 20 hours per week for a minimum of six consecutive months. The median age of entering the labour market for respondents born in 1961 and 1969 is only slightly higher than the median age at leaving school. This suggests a rather tight connection between these two processes. Among respondents born in 1965, the age at entering the labour market is much higher than the age at completion of education. This suggests that this cohort has been confronted by relatively bad labour market conditions, leading to a delay in finding a more of less stable job.

Table 9.1 *Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in the Netherlands, by gender and cohort (in years)*

	Males Cohorts			Females Cohorts		
	1961	1965	1969	1961	1965	1969
End of full time Educational enrolment						
Q1*	17.1	17.7	18.0	16.9	17.4	18.2
Q2	18.6	19.3	21.0	18.2	18.9	20.0
Q3	20.9	21.8	24.3	20.3	21.0	22.3
Q3-Q1	3.8	4.1	6.3	3.4	3.6	4.1
% not at age 30	1	0	-	0	2	-
Entry into labour market						
Q1	17.3	18.5	18.5	17.5	18.3	18.5
Q2	18.8	20.4	21.2	18.7	19.8	20.0
Q3	21.6	22.2	25.3	20.9	22.7	22.8
Q3-Q1	4.3	3.7	6.8	3.4	4.4	4.3
% not at age 30	2	5	-	5	11	-
Leaving the parental home						
Q1	19.8	20.4	19.8	18.7	18.8	19.0
Q2	22.2	22.3	21.7	20.3	20.7	20.7
Q3	24.6	24.7	25.0	22.5	22.5	22.2
Q3-Q1	4.8	4.3	5.2	3.8	3.7	3.2
% not at age 30	3	5	-	2	0	-
First union						
Q1	21.9	22.9	23.5	20.1	20.9	21.3
Q2	24.1	25.5	26.8	21.9	23.0	23.0
Q3	27.6	28.5	-	24.5	25.8	26.0
Q3-Q1	5.7	5.6	-	4.4	4.9	4.7
% not at age 30	17	14	-	9	11	-
First marriage						
Q1	23.8	25.5	-	21.6	23.0	24.4
Q2	27.8	29.8	-	24.6	25.6	-
Q3	-	-	-	31.3	-	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	9.7	-	-
% not at age 30	28	45	-	27	35	-
First child birth						
Q1	27.7	29.6	-	24.4	25.9	-
Q2	31.2	-	-	28.6	29.7	-
Q3	-	-	-	34.7	-	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	10.3	-	-
% not at age 30	59	71	-	41	50	-

Source: Panel Study on Social Integration in the Netherlands.
*Q1, Q2 and Q3 represent the first 3 quartiles (25, 50 and 75 per cent).

Figure 9.1a and the third panel of Table 9.1 reveal that women *leave the parental home* at an earlier age than men. For women born in 1961, the median age of leaving the parental house is 20.3 years; for men of the same cohort it is 22.2 years. No clear trends between the three birth cohorts emerge. This is supported by the results of the Wilcoxon tests: neither among men nor among women do the three cohorts differ in their timing of leaving the parental home. Furthermore, almost everyone has left the parental home by age 30.

In Figure 9.1b and the fourth panel of Table 9.1, clear differences between the birth cohorts in the timing of *entering a first union* become evident. Among men, the median age is 24.1 years for the oldest birth cohort (1961). In the younger birth cohorts the median age is 25.5 (1965) and almost 27 (1969), respectively. Among the oldest women, 50 per cent started a first union before age 22. The median age for the two younger birth cohorts is approximately one year later. At age 30, around 90 per cent of the women and 85 per cent of the men has ever entered a first union.

Figure 9.1c and the fifth panel of Table 9.1 present information on the timing of *first marriage*. Again, clear differences between the birth cohorts and between men and women show up. Among men born in 1961, 50 per cent is married before age 28. Among those of the next birth cohort, 45 per cent was still not married at age 30. The Wilcoxon tests show a siginificant increase in the age at first marriage among both men and women of consecutive birth cohorts, although women tend to marry earlier than men.

In Figure 9.1d, the cumulative percentage of young adults who have experienced the *birth of a first child* is displayed. The quartile ages are reproduced in the final panel of Table 9.1. Childbearing is postponed across cohorts. Among men of the oldest cohort (1961), 41 per cent had experienced the event before or by age 30. This percentage decreases to less than 30 per cent among men born in 1965. Although it is too early to draw definitive conclusions for the youngest cohort, it seems likely that this trend towards postponed childbearing will continue. Again, women experience the birth of their first child at an earlier age than men, but the trend towards postponement of parenthood is as clear among women as it is among men.

So far the discussion has focused on the timing of separate events in the transition to adulthood. Another important issue is the extent to which these events occur simultaneously. A decrease in the level of simultaneity of two events indicates that decisions about them are increasingly being made and/or at least executed sequentially rather than jointly. Table 9.2 presents

information on the extent to which events in the transition to adulthood oc-
cur simultaneously. Events are defined as occurring simultaneously if there
is a time gap of three months or less between them.

First, we examine the simultaneity of leaving the educational system and
entering the labour market. Table 9.2 shows that these events occur simulta-
neously for less than half of the young adults born in the 1960s. In line with
our discussion of the data presented in Table 9.1, an interesting cohort pat-
tern can be discerned. Compared to men and women born in 1961, those
from 1965 are much more likely to enter the labour market more than three
months after they have ended their education. This suggests that the eco-
nomic crisis of the 1980s has delayed their entry into the labour market.
Among men and women born in 1969, the pattern is partly reversed. Enter-
ing the labour market after completion of education becomes somewhat less
likely, whereas entry of the labour market before completion of education
becomes more likely. Two explanations for this can be suggested. First, the
economy improved during the early 1990s. This may have facilitated an
earlier entry into the labour market of men and women born in 1969. At the
same time, however, the financial situation of students deteriorated as a re-
sult of budget cuts in student loans. In order to earn enough money to com-
plete their education, an increasing number of students may have been
forced to find a job to finance their education.

In the next two panels of Table 9.2 we examine how first union and mar-
riage are connected to leaving the parental home. In most cases the forma-
tion of the first union takes place after leaving the parental home, and not at
the same time. Only among women born in 1961 did a majority experience
the two events simultaneously. However, the level of simultaneity clearly
decreased in successive cohorts. In the oldest cohort of men, 48 per cent left
the parental home at more or less the same time as starting their first union,
but in the younger cohorts we see that a majority left the parental home be-
fore starting a first union. In the youngest cohort this percentage has risen to
74 per cent; for women similar cohort patterns are observed.

It is rather unusual in the Netherlands for marriage and leaving the parental
home to coincide. The majority of both men and women have already left
the parental home by the time they get married. But again we see important
differences between the birth cohorts. In the oldest cohort, almost 20 per
cent of the men left the parental home to get married. In the youngest co-
hort, only 2 per cent show this pattern. For women a similar trend emerges.
Almost 30 per cent of the oldest cohort still married out of the parental
home; in the youngest cohort this percentage has dropped to 7 per cent.

Next we examine whether young adults enter their first union by marriage. Simultaneity between these events was observed among only a minority of young adults. This implies that a majority opts for unmarried cohabitation prior to marriage but differences between birth cohorts are again observable. In the oldest cohort of men, about 34 per cent married without prior cohabitation. Within the youngest cohort, only 9 per cent did so. However, it should be noticed that only about 27 per cent of those born in 1969 has experienced both events. A similar pattern emerges for women.

In terms of childbearing, very few young adults experienced their first birth and their first union simultaneously. The overwhelming majority had their first child after their first union; neither for men nor for women do we see any clear trend in this respect across birth cohorts. As the bottom panel in Table 9.2 demonstrates, the large majority of young adults experience their first birth after their first marriage. We do see some small differences between the birth cohorts but, because of the small proportions of young adults in the younger cohorts who have experienced both events, it is hard to draw any firm conclusions.

Several lessons can be drawn from these descriptive results. First, for most transitions there is no clear 'normal' age; rather, some young adults experience a particular transition at an early age, whereas others do so much later or not at all. Second, large differences exist in the timing of events between men and women, with the latter experiencing most transitions a few years earlier. Furthermore, a clear trend towards postponement of most events is observed. With the exception of leaving the parental home, younger cohorts experience events at a later age than older cohorts. In addition, the extent of simultaneity between family life events decreases across successive cohorts. Increasingly, Dutch young adults seem to view leaving home, a first union, a marriage and parenthood as isolated events.

9.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

Now we turn to an explanation of the differences in the occurrence and timing of demographic events. Usually, differences in the timing and pattern of demographic events are attributed to two types of factors, namely, *restrictions and opportunities* young adults are faced with that either impede or facilitate their entry into adult roles, and *attitudes, values and norms* about the appropriateness of certain roles and/or their appropriate timing (Featherman, Hogan and Sørensen, 1984; Marini, 1985, 1992). Some of the

Table 9.2   (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in the Nether-
lands by gender and cohort

	Males Cohorts			Females Cohorts		
	1961	1965	1969	1961	1965	1969
Leaving full-time edu-cation and						
entry into a first job						
=	51	39	39	42	33	36
<	39	49	45	44	53	45
>	11	12	16	14	14	16
(%)	(99)	(95)	(72)	(100)	(96)	(87)
Leaving the parental home and						
first union						
=	48	42	25	56	46	38
<	50	58	74	42	53	61
>	2	0	1	2	1	1
(%)	(95)	(80)	(56)	(98)	(93)	(73)
marriage						
=	19	10	2	30	18	7
<	81	90	98	69	82	92
>	1	0	0	2	0	1
(%)	(95)	(79)	(54)	(98)	(93)	(72)
Marriage and						
first union						
=	34	22	9	43	32	14
>	66	78	91	66	68	87
(%)	(82)	(58)	(27)	(90)	(75)	(48)
First child and						
first union						
=	1	1	1	0	1	0
<	1	1	0	2	0	1
>	98	98	99	98	100	99
(%)	(82)	(57)	(27)	(90)	(75)	(48)
first marriage						
=	3	1	5	2	5	0
<	11	6	10	10	7	7
>	86	93	85	88	89	93
(%)	(67)	(31)	(7)	(78)	(53)	(21)

Source: Panel Study on Social Integration in the Netherlands.

=   per cent having experienced both events within 3 months of each other
<   per cent having experienced first event more than 3 months before second
>   per cent having experienced first event more than 3 months after second
(%) per cent having experienced both events

restrictions facing young adults as they enter into adulthood are related to their social background. However, a major type of restriction is the interrelatedness between life course trajectories (Mulder, 1993; Willekens, 1988). In particular, educational enrolment is often seen as competing with students' time, money and energy for family life activities. However, the occurrence and timing of such activities is also influenced by values and norms held among young adults. The value attached to family life in the hierarchy of ultimate life goals may differ, for instance, between religious and non-religious young adults, or between the highly educated and those with only a low level of education.

9.4.1   The impact of educational participation and attainment level

It is well known that higher educated young adults postpone family life events - like marriage and childbearing - more than young adults who attained only low levels of education. As already stated in Chapter 1, two competing explanations have been proposed for this finding (Blossfeld & Huinink, 1991). First, highly educated young adults may have acquired other values than young adults attaining less education. The former may have developed career aspirations, leading them to postpone family life events that might otherwise interfere with their career plans. A second explanation stresses the incompatibility between educational enrolment and family life. To test which of these two competing interpretations is correct, both factors - educational attainment and educational enrolment - have to be incorporated in analyses of the determinants of the timing of entry into adult roles.

The hypothesis about the impact of educational enrolment on family formation, as formulated in Chapter 1, stresses the incompatibility of dividing one's time and energy between school and family life. As a result of this *conflict of interests*, most young adults enrolled in education will postpone living with a partner, marriage and childbearing until they have completed their education. Whether or not educational enrolment will also lead to postponement of leaving the parental home is not *a priori* entirely clear. The negative effect of educational enrolment may be stronger for women than for men.

Most studies on the impact of educational enrolment either focus on full-time enrolment only, or they do not make a distinction between full-time and part-time enrolment. However, not all forms of educational participation ask for full-time involvement of students. Many young adults follow part-time courses, particularly in combination with a job. In general, enrolment

in full-time education is more time-consuming than participation in part-time courses. Therefore, we expect that the delaying effect of educational participation is stronger if young adults are full-time enrolled than if they follow a part-time educational course. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Full-time educational participation has a stronger negative effect on the rate at which demographic life events occur than part-time educational participation.

This hypothesis is a further articulation of the series 2a-2d as formulated in the introductory chapter. In line with that series, however, the delaying effect of educational enrolment is expected to be stronger among women than among men (hypothesis 2b). This may be particularly true for part-time enrolment by women, as such enrolment may signal a strong career orientation. A partner, and a child in particular, are generally not conducive to attaining this goal of high job achievement. Therefore, we also formulate the following additional hypothesis:

Part-time educational participation has a stronger negative impact on the rate at which demographic life events occur among women than among men.

The second explanation of the delaying impact of education on family formation is based on the idea that higher educated young adults have invested a lot of energy in accumulating human capital. To the extent that family life interferes with career prospects, entry into such roles would result in high opportunity costs. However, educational attainment is not necessarily expected to lead to postponement of entry into all adult roles. In former Dutch research, for instance, it was found that a high level of education leads to an earlier departure from the parental home (Latten, 1990; Baanders, 1991). This can be attributed to the fact that the higher educated often have to leave the parental home in order to complete their education in some other city. Furthermore, labour market opportunities for higher educated young adults in the Netherlands are often spatially more dispersed than those for young adults with lower levels of education. As a result, moving out of the parental home may become a necessity.

Hypothesis 3b as formulated in Chapter 1 expects a negative effect of the educational attainment on the rate of the transition to adulthood for women, but a positive one for men. Additionally, it is expected that the impact of the

educational attainment on the rate at which these transitions occur becomes weaker with increasing age (hypothesis 3c). We subscribe to both.

9.4.2   The impact of religiosity and church attendance

Christianity has historically attached a great deal of importance to family life. Sexual relationships were only legitimate within marriage which was viewed as a life-long bond, and children were considered as the natural outcome of the marital relationship. Although most Christian denominations in the Netherlands have considerably relaxed these views in the course of time, one would still expect that religious young adults nowadays endorse traditional family values more than non-religious young adults. Therefore, we expect that religious young adults will be less inclined than non-religious young adults to enter into non-marital cohabitation, and more to marry and have children at an early age.

It is not entirely clear what aspect of religiosity might account for this assumed traditional behaviour of religious young adults. At least three plausible explanations can be put forward. A first explanation suggests that religion as such - or at least Christianity as such - predisposes people to hold traditional family values. If so, members of Christian denominations should show more traditional demographic behaviour than non-members. A second explanation suggests that the effect of religiosity depends on the denomination young adults are affiliated with. In the Netherlands, we can roughly distinguish three different groups: Catholics, Protestants and non-religious people. Both with regard to official teaching and daily practice, Catholics are usually more traditional than Protestants. For instance, Catholics in all European countries are less supportive of gender equality than Protestants and non-religious persons (Wilcox & Jelen, 1993). Within the Catholic church, there is also still a strong opposition to contraception, abortion and divorce. Thus, in general, Catholics are expected to be more traditional and family oriented in their behaviour than Protestants. Although it is still unclear whether this will also hold for the Netherlands, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Being a Catholic has a stronger positive effect than being a Protestant on the rate at which marriage and first childbirth occur, and a stronger negative effect on the likelihood of unmarried cohabitation.

A third explanation of the alleged traditionality of religious young adults suggests that it is not religious membership as such that influences their demographic behaviour, but rather that this depends on the strength of their

religious commitment. Many young adults in the Netherlands have been brought up religiously, are formally still a member of a church, but are not at all active anymore. We assume therefore that regular church visitors are more integrated in the religious community, and as such will behave more in accordance with its norms and values. This leads us to the following hypothesis:

Level of church attendance has a positive effect on the rate at which marriage and first childbirth occur, and a negative effect on the likelihood of unmarried cohabitation.

9.4.3 Methods

Hazard rate models were estimated to examine the effect of educational participation, educational attainment, religion and frequency of church attendance on the timing of the different life events. In this type of analysis, the rate at which an event occurs is modelled as being dependent on a number of covariates. Hazard models differ in the manner they handle the time-dependence of the process of interest. In this instance, a piecewise constant exponential model is used. The time axis is split into two-year age periods, within which the rate is held constant but allowed to vary between them. The results of two types of models will be presented. In Model 1 only main effects, whether time-constant or time-varying, are estimated. If interaction effects of educational attainment, educational participation and religiosity with age turned out to be statistically significant, these were added to the model. These estimates are presented in Model 2. If no statistically significant interactions were found, no Model 2 is presented.

Operationalisation of the events. We calculated the ages at leaving the parental home, first union, first marriage, and first childbirth. All are measured in months since birth. Respondents who have not experienced an event at the time of interview were censored at that time. Because of the time-varying measure of religiosity, we include in the analyses only information about events occurring after 1987. This will be explained in the section about the operationalisation of religiosity.

Level of education. In the survey, information is available on the educational career of the respondents. Based on this information, a time-varying covariate indicating the highest level of education successfully completed was constructed. The scores were given in number of years of enrolment in education needed to obtain the degree by the shortest possible route.

Participation in education. Extensive information on the educational careers of respondents was collected. Using this information, two time-varying co-variates were constructed. A first covariate indicated whether or not a respondent was full-time enrolled, and a second whether or not a respondent was part-time enrolled. A respondent was classified as being enrolled in full-time education if this person followed daytime courses or did some practical, for instance to become a nurse. Part-time enrolment refers to a course outside daytime hours that lasted three years or longer. The reference group for both covariates is 'not in education'.

Religious denomination and frequency of church attendance. The operation-alisation of the two religious variables poses something of a puzzle. Studies on the transition to adulthood usually rely on retrospectively collected life history data. In such datasets, religiosity is often measured at the time of interview. This is not a problem if it can be safely assumed that a person's religious denomination or frequency of church attendance is more or less constant across the life course. However, it has been shown that the fre-quency of church visits can vary strongly over the individual life time (Stol-zenberg, Blair-Loy & Waite, 1995). In addition, in a rapidly secularising country like the Netherlands, this assumption is even more unrealistic. Therefore, the use of 'final' religiosity in hazard analyses can lead to biased estimates of the true effect of such variables on the transition to adulthood. A major strength of the PSIN dataset is its panel character. This allows us to estimate the unbiased effect of religiosity on the timing of events that occur after the first wave of data collection. However, the drawback of this proce-dure is that we have to exclude events that occurred before this first wave. Between 1987 and 1991, respondents are given the religiosity scores based on their answers given in the first survey wave in 1987. In 1991, these scores are updated based on their answers given in the third wave. This measure will be used to analyse only those events that occurred after 1987. In our view, estimates of the effect of religious denomination and frequency of church attendance from these latter analyses are less biased than those from analyses including all events.

Two dummy variables, one for being Catholic and one for being Protestant, were created to indicate the religious denomination respondents said they belonged to. Respondents who were not a member of a church constitute the reference category. Information on frequency of church attendance was used to categorise respondents into four groups: weekly church visit, monthly church visit, irregular church visit, and no church visit (the reference cate-gory).

9.4.4 Results

In Table 9.3 the parameter estimates of the models are presented. Because we are primarily interested in the effects of substantive factors on the timing of family life events, and also in order to reduce the complexity of the tables, the parameter estimates for the discrete age categories are not shown. In the descriptive analyses presented earlier, we already noticed a trend towards postponement of all events, with the exception of leaving the parental home. Controlling for the other effects, most differences between the cohorts remain and can, therefore, not completely be attributed to the influence of education and religion.

Educational participation was hypothesised to decrease the rate at which demographic life events occur. From Table 9.3 it can concluded that the estimates for the effect of full-time enrolment for men are indeed negatively significant for all events, with the exception of leaving the parental home. We see a similar pattern for the effects of women's full-time enrolment. This implies that enrolment in full-time education clearly delays union formation and childbearing among both both sexes. Comparing the estimates by gender suggests that in most instances the effects are stronger for women than for men.

Enrolment in part-time education does not have much of an effect on the transition to adulthood among men. It only has a statistically significant positive effect on the timing of first marriage, in all other cases the effect is insignificant. For women, the effects of being part-time enrolled are negative and statistically significant for the timing of all the events in the transition to adulthood, with the exception of first union formation. However, they are closer to unity - that is, weaker - than the corresponding effects of full-time enrolment (except for the effect on leaving the parental home). These results support the hypothesis about the difference between full-time and part-time enrolment. Participation in full-time education leads to more postponement of family life transitions than participation in part-time education. Furthermore, participation in the latter delays family formation among women but not among men. These results confirm our hypothesis that women who participate in full-time or part-time education delay family life events more than men in corresponding circumstances.

In Table 9.3, a significant positive interaction effect between part-time education and age is reported for the timing of leaving home among women. This suggests a stronger effect of part-time education on the timing of leaving home within younger age groups. Being enrolled in part-time education

is a reason for young women to delay the process of leaving home, but not for older women.

Level of education has a significant positive effect on the timing of leaving home for both men and women. This confirms the second part of hypothesis 3a in Chapter 1, where it was suggested that the higher educated leave the parental home sooner than the lower educated. On the other hand, there are negative effects of women's education on the timing of their first marriage and child. When we compare these effects with those for men, we conclude that educational level delays marriage and parenthood more among women than among men. This partly confirms hypothesis 3b in Chapter 1. Finally, these results show that higher educated young adults postpone parenthood but not union formation per se.

In Table 9.3, three significant interaction effects between education and age are reported for men. To begin with, there is a negative effect on the timing of leaving the parental home, which suggests that a high level of education accelerates leaving home particularly at young ages. Furthermore, we observe a positive interaction effect on the timing of first marriage: a high level of education delays marriage at young ages only. The same reasoning applies to the birth of the first child, among both men and women: the effect of high education becomes weaker with increasing age.

For most transitions, the effect of *frequency of church attendance* turned out to be stronger than the effect of *religious denomination.* However, the impact of the former varies somewhat depending on whether young adults belonged to the Roman Catholic Church or to one of the Protestant churches. Therefore, these effects have to be interpreted jointly. No clear effect of religiosity on the age at leaving home is observed. Among men, no effect on the timing of entry into a first union is visible either. However, religiosity is related to the age at entry into a first union among women. Model 2 suggests that both weekly and irregular churchgoers have a lower propensity to enter a union at very young ages. This same tendency can be observed for entry into motherhood: again, weekly and irregular churchgoers are less likely to become mothers at very young ages. In addition, frequent churchgoers enter into marriage at an earlier age than non-churchgoers. The effect of Catholicism is difficult to interpret. It seems to stimulate marriage among women, but to do the opposite among men.

Table 9.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in the Netherlands: relative risks

independent variables	Males						
	leaving parental home		first union	first marriage		first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
cohort 1961	1.45	1.60	0.98	2.04*	1.88~	2.00	1.76
cohort 1965	1.42~	1.47*	1.52**	1.82*	1.74*	1.21	1.13
level of education	1.16**	1.54**	1.02	1.02	0.68*	0.97	0.62*
full-time enrolled	1.19	1.09	0.57**	0.36**	0.39*	0.37~	0.41~
parttime enrolled	0.91	0.91	1.05	1.50*	1.51*	0.86	0.86
catholics	1.00	1.02	0.93	0.58*	0.58*	0.89	0.88
protestants	0.73	0.75	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.99	0.97
weekly churchvisit	1.18	1.17	0.99	3.15**	3.31**	2.65**	2.82**
monthly churchvisit	0.63~	0.65~	0.74	1.55	1.56	0.98	1.01
irregular churchvisit	1.01	1.02	1.27	2.53**	2.49**	1.17	1.18
education * age	-	0.97**	-	-	1.03*	-	1.04*
number of events	234	234	229	157	157	154	154
log-likelihood	-1145.8	-1141.6	-1249.5	-888.4	-885.2	-909.1	-906.4

Table 9.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in the Netherlands: relative risks (cont.)

independent variables	leaving parental home		first union		first marriage	first parenthood	
	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 1	model 2
cohort 1961	0.18~	0.11*	0.48~	0.53	1.51	1.71~	1.59
cohort 1965	0.93	0.94	1.02	1.03	1.45~	1.73*	1.65~
level of education	1.08*	1.08*	0.97	0.97	0.94~	0.88***	0.64**
full-time enrolled	0.71*	0.85	0.36**	0.36**	0.15**	0.04**	0.04**
parttime enrolled	0.43**	0.04**	0.78	0.78	0.49**	0.42**	0.43**
catholics	0.68~	0.70~	1.48*	1.51*	1.55*	1.25	1.29
protestants	1.05	1.09	1.45~	1.40	1.27	1.28	1.34
weekly churchvisit	0.93	0.91	0.78	0.20*	2.01*	1.05	0.12
monthly churchvisit	0.75	0.73	0.68	0.71	1.32	1.05	0.76
irregular churchvisit	0.94	0.94	0.61*	0.20**	0.82	0.67~	0.09~
education * age	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.03*
fulltime * age	-	0.96	-	-	-	-	-
parttime * age	-	1.40**	-	-	-	-	-
weekly churchvisit * age	-	-	-	1.20*	-	-	1.21*
monthly churchvisit * age	-	-	-	1.00	-	-	1.03
irregular churchvisit * age	-	-	-	1.15*	-	-	1.19*
Number of events	233	233	245	245	190	182	182
Log-likelihood	-1033.44	-1029.17	-1248.84	-1244.94	-1014.92	-1051.51	-1048.28

Source: Panel Study on Social Integration in the Netherlands

~ p < .10 * p < .05 ** p < .01

9.5 | Discussion and conclusions

This chapter examined the transition to adulthood of men and women in the Netherlands. The focus was on four different family life transitions, namely, leaving the parental home, starting a first union, entering a first marriage, and having a first child. Besides a description of the timing of these life events and their simultaneity, hypotheses were tested about the influence of educational level, educational enrolment, and religiosity on the transition to adulthood.

Our descriptive analyses showed some interesting results. First, no clear 'normal' age exists for most transitions; rather, some young adults experience a particular transition at an early age, whereas others much later or not at all. A second observation is that there are large differences in the timing of events between men and women. Women experience most transitions a few years earlier than men. Third, a clear trend towards postponement of most events is observed. With the exception of leaving the parental home, younger cohorts experience these events at a later age than older cohorts. A final observation is that leaving home, entry into a union and first marriage increasingly occur sequentially rather than simultaneously. Many young adults leave home in order to live alone rather than with a partner. Furthermore, more young adults opt for unmarried cohabitation prior to marriage.

In the explanatory analyses, a number of hypotheses were tested about the impact of education and religion on the entry into adulthood. It was suggested that the impact of education could be twofold. First, enrolment in education could lead to a delayed entry into adult roles. Second, higher educated young adults could be more career oriented than those with lower levels of education. The results that were obtained clearly indicate that full-time educational enrolment leads to a delay in the occurrence of family life events for men and women. An interesting new finding is that women who are part-time enrolled postpone their life events more than men enrolled in part-time education. Particularly if combined with a job, part-time education reduces the amount of time women have available for family formation. In addition, women who follow part-time courses probably are more career oriented than other women. Given that a family and a career are still difficult to combine in the Netherlands, career oriented women are more likely to postpone family formation than women who feel less attached to the labour market.

The hypothesis about the impact of the level of education is not completely supported by the data. Higher educated women and men postpone first mar-

riage as well as the birth of their first child. However, a high level of education does not affect first union formation. It is interesting to note that this was found among women as well as men. Usually, for women, a delaying effect of educational attainment on family formation is expected. Two different explanations for our finding can be given. First, one could assume that the effect for men is largely spurious, and results from the fact that highly educated men generally marry highly educated women. Because the latter postpone marriage and motherhood, the same kind of association turns up in analyses of their male counterparts. An alternative explanation would stress the fact that higher education renders both women and men less traditional. Just like their female schoolmates, highly educated men may have acquired attitudes concerning family life - for instance about a fair division of household chores and childrearing tasks - that are difficult to combine with their occupational interests, leading to a postponement of parenthood for both sexes. A final observation is that higher educated men and women leave the parental home earlier than the lower educated. This probably results from the need and preference of higher educated young adults to leave their parental home in order to complete their studies.

Finally, the results show a clear effect of religiosity on entry into adulthood. In general, the higher the frequency of church attendance among young adults, the more traditional their demographic behaviour. Young adults who often go to church marry sooner, and men who often go to church become fathers earlier than those who do not. Due to the selection of events presented here, the impact of religiosity on family formation could even be stronger than these results suggest. For instance, given the moral teachings of religious denominations on the importance of the marriage bond, religious young adults could be expected to be less inclined to cohabit, unmarried, and if they do, to be more inclined to proceed quickly with marriage than non-religious young adults. In addition, the stronger pro-family values in religious circles could lead to a higher number of children born to the religious. Tests of these ideas would be worthwhile because our results suggest that in spite of the secularisation of Dutch society, integration within a religious community still exerts a strong influence on the behaviour of young adults.

9.6 | References

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Figure 9.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in the Netherlands, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort*

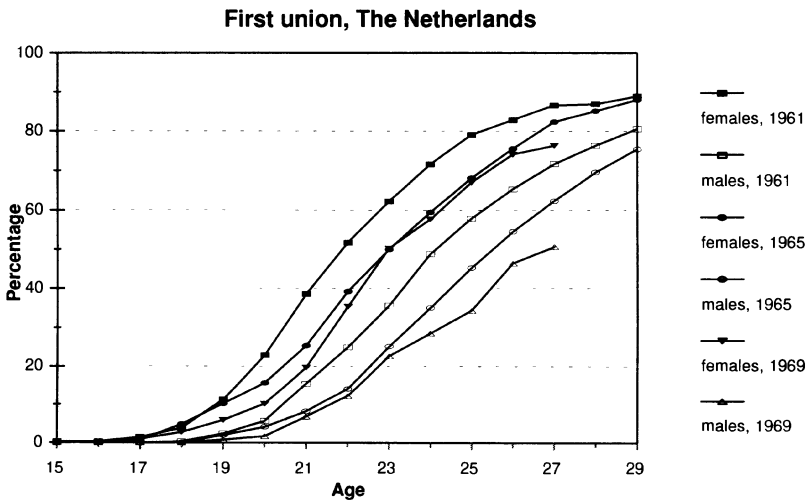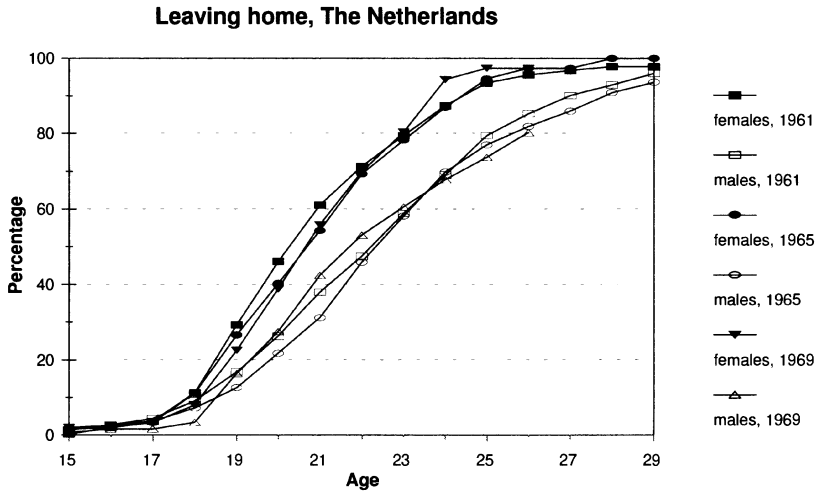**Leaving home, The Netherlands**

First union, The Netherlands

*Figure 9.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in the Netherlands,
inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*

First marriage, The Netherlands

First birth, The Netherlands
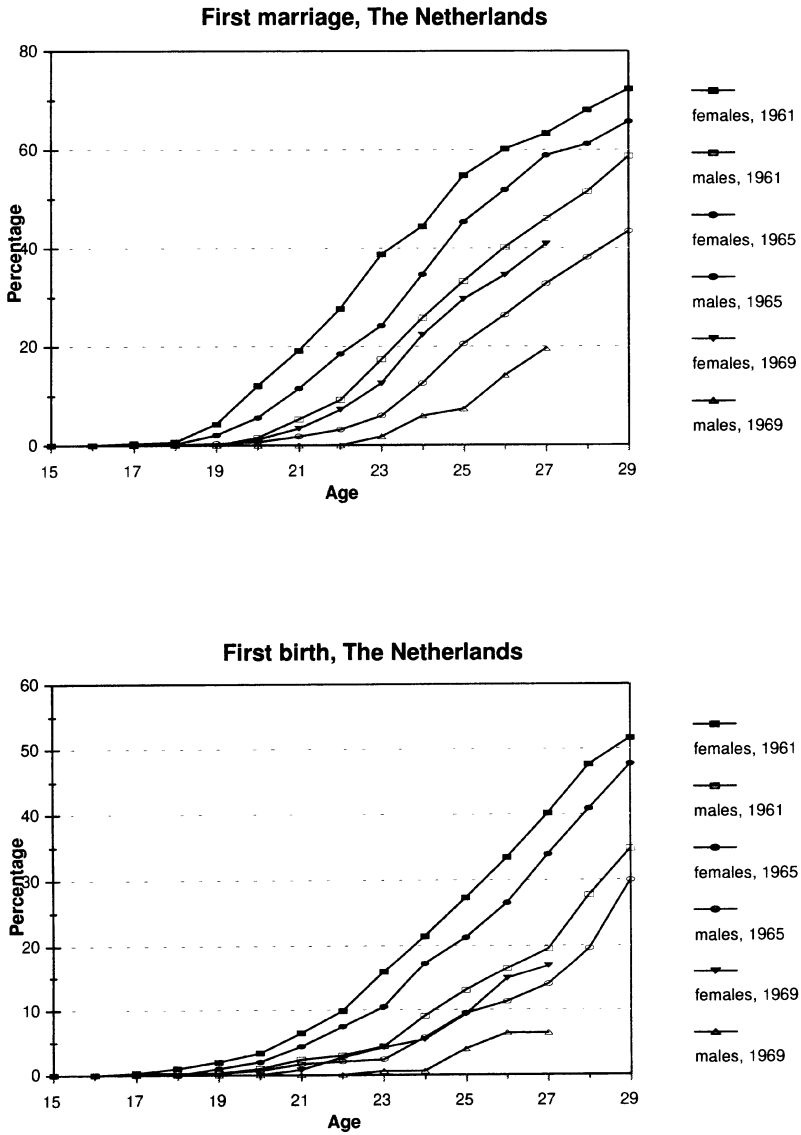
10. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN NORWAY

TURID NOACK

10.1 | Introduction

As demographers and statisticians, we may study family events over time and across borders, but the meaning and substance of one and the same event is often very different. Every Norwegian who is old enough to remember the 1960s, knows for instance that the curve describing births out-of-wedlock is mixing events with totally different characteristics. The low figures in the beginning of the 1960s, less than four per cent, are a measure of stigmatised single motherhood, while today's high figures, nearly every second childbirth, reflect mostly on the well-accepted practice of non-marital cohabitation. A graph showing changes in the number of births out-of-wedlock over time thus describes so many different phenomena that it would hardly make any sense to present it. Such substantial changes are among the topics of this chapter, with special emphasis on demographic events in early adult life.

First, we will examine at which age two single-year birth cohorts, those of 1945 and 1960, have taken decisive steps towards residential autonomy, economic independence and establishing a family of procreation. These cohorts give a representative picture of the Norwegian post-war cohorts' experience of the transition to adulthood. The changes are characterised by some well-known factors like the increase in time it takes to go from dependent childhood to independent adulthood, and a less chronolised life course. Among the many differences, there are also events which apparently are surprisingly similar for the two cohorts. However, at closer inspection, the dissimilarities may be more significant than we can measure by using traditional demographic methods.

Two of the events which will be discussed at length are consensual unions and the decoupling of parenthood from marriage. In Norway as in other Scandinavian countries, these events have amazingly fast transformed from being deviant to being well-accepted or even normative behaviour. As in most countries, the Norwegian population statistics have had and still have major difficulties in handling these shifts in family behaviour. The problem is partly a lack of quantitative data, and partly the need for more precise knowledge of the more qualitative aspects of these behavioural changes. These issues are discussed in this chapter. We will also exemplify how family policy has been adjusted and may have influenced the new patterns.

10.2 | Data and methods

Norway's contribution to the Fertility and Family Surveys (FFS) project, namely its Family and Occupation Survey (F&O 88), was conducted as early as in 1988, before common standards for sampling procedure and model questionnaire were established. The fact that F&O 88 partly worked as a pre-test of the FFS project is, however, only a minor problem because most of the important biographical data are also a part of the Norwegian survey (Noack and Østby, 1996). There are a few notable differences, though. For the purpose of international comparison, we should notice that "leaving the parental home" in the Norwegian FFS is referring to the most recent departure rather than to the first. Another significant deviation is the time lag in the fieldwork compared to the bulk of surveys in the other participating countries. The youngest respondents in the Norwegian survey were born in 1968. Aged 20 at the time of interview, they still had several steps in the transition to adulthood ahead of them. Only for those born in 1960 (aged 28 at the time of interview) are we able to provide a fairly complete description of the whole transition process.

The sample in F&O 88 was drawn from only six births cohorts - women born in 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, 1965 and 1968, and men born in 1945 and 1960. As opposed to most other FFS surveys, we are therefore not able to construct five-year birth cohorts.

Altogether 4,019 women and 1,543 men were interviewed. The non-response rate among them was 18.5 and 21.8 per cent, respectively. It was higher among childless respondents than among parents, and also somewhat higher among never married and previously married than among married women and men.

Previous analyses had shown that the cohorts of 1945 and 1960 are well suited to illustrate decisive changes in the process of establishing a family in post-war

Norway (Blom, Noack and Østby, 1993). In the absence of complete data on younger cohorts, this chapter will therefore concentrate on these two birth cohorts. Another reason for selecting them is the fact that only for these two cohorts does the Norwegian FFS have data from both female and male respondents.

More recent population statistics, register data and surveys may shed additional light on the changes in the transition to adulthood. Most of these sources are, however, lacking biographical information for determining the exact timing of the various events. Therefore, they are not well suited to analyses based on hazard models, which the ordinary FFS data allow.

10.3 | Timing and determinants of the transition to adulthood

10.3.1 Education and entry into the labour market

An increase in compulsory schooling, from 7 to 9 years, was introduced in Norway the same year as the 1945 cohort ended their 7 years of schooling. This change was, however, not enforced all over the country until 15 years later. From the 1945 to the 1960 cohort, the average number of years of education (measured at age 28) increased by 1.2 for men and 1.9 for women. Women and men of the 1960 cohort spent an equal number of years in education, namely 12.7 and 12.6 years, respectively. Measured by competence, however, women are still a little behind men (Ellingsæter, Noack and Rønsen, 1993).

In addition to more time spent in school, the period of enrolment has become less continuous and is more frequently interrupted by spells of labour force participation. When we look at the *age at completing education* and the age at entry into the labour market, respectively, the 1960 cohort displays the shortest inter-quartile range, both for women and men (Table 10.1). Differences between the 1945 and the 1960 cohort are modest, except perhaps for the difference between the third and first quartile ages of men's education.

It is difficult to get a clear picture of how education and labour force participation interfere with early adult life by only examining the age at completing current highest education and the *age at entry into the labour market*. The picture becomes clearer when looking at the average proportion of cohort members being in education or at work for different ages (Figures 10.1 and 10.2). Among men in the two cohorts, the difference in education is primarily notable in the early phases, where the youngest cohort spent significantly more time in education than the elder cohort. The same holds true for women, but among them also the twenties are clearly different for the two

cohorts. Using 23 years of age as an example, 24 per cent of the 1960 cohort was at that time still in education compared to only 10 per cent of the 1945 cohort.

More teenage years spent at school leaves the 1960 cohort with less opportunities for work. This applies to both women and men. After 21 years of age there are, however, only minor disparities between the two male cohorts. For the female cohorts, differences in the proportion employed quickly increased from 23 years of age onward. At age 28 for instance, 49 per cent of the women born in 1945 were in the labour force compared to 74 per cent of those born in 1960.

We have also looked at the average time spent in the work force at 28 years of age. Measured by the mean number of person-years, there was only a minor difference between the cohorts born in 1945 and 1960. From 16 to 28 years of age, the 1945 cohort spent on average 6.6 person-years in the work force, compared to 6.2 years for the 1960 cohort. But behind this insignificant variation in the number of years, there are widely differing processes between the two cohorts. The 1945 cohort displayed a typical phase adaptation between family and work, in the sense that a major proportion of employment was spent as full-time employment in the years prior to family formation. For the 1960 cohort, which spent more time in education, corresponding adjustments occurred later in life. And although they postponed parenthood longer than the 1945 cohort, many combined childrearing and employment. In other words, although employment was often part-time, they ran a double race.

10.3.2   Leaving the parental home

Norwegian mass media have featured many articles on "how to survive with a grown-up child in the house" and reports on "mambos" (adult sons still living in their boys' rooms and receiving room service from their mums). In this way, the mass media have created the idea that the age at leaving the parental home has increased noticeably in the last years and that this is a problem. Increasing ages at leaving the parental home have been reported for several countries. As for Norway, we should ask whether this is a myth or reality.

As regards *first moving out*, the median age has increased slightly, but this is a long-lasting development which started already with the cohorts born around 1940 (Texmon, 1994). The fact that Norway is a sparsely populated country with a dispersed settlement pattern undoubtedly forced many youngsters in the first post-war cohorts to leave home at an early age in order to continue their education, compulsory as well as continued. Later, as schools and universities became much more decentralised, and road construction and communications made travelling more easy, younger people had the opportunity to take their

education without moving away. The resulting increase in age at original departure has however come to a stop in more recent times. An omnibus survey conducted by Statistics Norway in 1992 for instance revealed that the cohorts born in the early 1970s did not stay with their family of origin any longer than those born around the 1960s. Unfortunately, we do not have more recent information.

Due to the transitional nature of military service and school attendance, and as a result of early changes in their employment or partnership careers, many young people return to their family of origin at least once. DaVanzo and Goldscheider (1990) have pointed out the role of the parental home as a normal base of operations for young unmarried people. A Norwegian study of the migration career of a representative sample of persons aged 16-79 showed that among those who reported a final departure from their parents, slightly more than one half had moved out only once (Texmon, 1994). The rest, and more often men than women, had returned at least once to the parental home. In the Norwegian FFS, respondents were only asked about the *most recent* departure. Analysis of other Norwegian survey data has, however, showed that the median age at *first* moving out is about 1.5 to 2 years lower than at the final departure. The gap between the first and the final moving out is a little larger for men than for women (Texmon, 1995).

Considering the *most recent* moving out, there is no increase in the age at leaving the parental home among the Norwegian post-war cohorts. The median age for the final departure is about the same for the cohorts of 1945 and 1960, a little over 20 years for women and around 22 years for men (Table 10.1). This stable pattern is confirmed by other data sources. In both cohorts, women left their parental home earlier than men. This earlier moving out of Norwegian girls is not only a reflection of gender differences in age at first cohabitation. Also among those who left to live alone, girls moved away somewhat earlier than boys (Texmon, 1995).

Comparing the two cohorts, moving out of the parental home occurred over a shorter period of time in the 1960 than in the 1945 cohort (Table 10.1). Among women born in 1945, the inter-quartile range for the age at leaving the parental home was 4.5 years compared to 2.9 years for the 1960 cohort. There is, however, a possibility that members of the 1960 cohort still might leave home again after the age of 28. If so, the final inter-cohort difference may turn out to be smaller.

Table 10.1 Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in Norway, by gender and cohort (in years)

	Males cohort		Females cohort	
	1945	1960	1945	1960
Completed their current highest level of education				
Q1*	16.3	17.3	16.0	17.1
Q2	20.0	19.2	17.8	18.9
Q3	25.1	23.3	22.3	22.3
Q3-Q1	8.8	6.0	6.3	5.2
% not at age 27	14	2	17	3
Entry into labour market				
Q1	15.0	16.5	15.5	17.0
Q2	16.3	18.1	17.0	18.6
Q3	18.6	19.5	18.9	19.8
Q3-Q2	2.3	1.4	1.9	1.2
% not at age 27	1	1	2	2
Leaving the parental home (most recent departure)				
Q1	19.0	19.8	18.9	18.8
Q2	22.1	22.0	20.9	20.2
Q3	25.3	24.4	23.4	21.7
Q3-Q1	6.3	4.6	4.5	2.9
% not at age 27	15	12	7	3
First union				
Q1	22.1	21.4	20.2	19.5
Q2	24.3	23.7	22.3	21.1
Q3	26.9	26.7	24.7	23.9
Q3-Q1	4.8	5.3	4.5	4.4
% not at age 27	22	21	12	12
First marriage				
Q1	22.4	23.9	20.3	21.1
Q2	24.4	-	22.6	25.2
Q3	-	-	-	-
% not at age 27	26	54	14	41
First child birth				
Q1	23.3	24.7	21.0	21.7
Q2	26.1	28.3	23.7	25.7
Q3	-	-	27.2	-
% not at age 27	38	55	24	39

Source: Family and Occupation Survey (1988), Division for Social and Demographic Research, Oslo

*Q1, Q2 and Q3 are first, second and third quartiles

The Norwegian FFS data about leaving the parental home have been analysed in a comprehensive work based on hazard regression techniques (Texmon, 1995). The main effects of the covariates are different for women and men. Put briefly, high socio-economic background, high level of education and being employed had a positive influence on moving out behaviour among men, while these factors did not exert any obvious effect on female behaviour. Place of origin exerted a distinct influence on women. Growing up in a remote rural area made them leave their parental home at an earlier age. Having many siblings (3 or more) also increased the probability of men and women leaving home early, while being a single child seemed to have the opposite effect. Religious affiliation had no clear effect on men, but may have kept women at home a little longer.

The *first* and the *most recent* migration from the parental home may have different correlations with other demographic events. Considering the final departure, the Norwegian data do not display any tendency towards a decoupling of leaving the parental home and marriage – rather the opposite seems to be true (Table 10.2). However, the observation period for the 1960 cohort is too short to make conclusive comparisons with the 1945 cohort. The figures for the 1960 cohort only allow conclusions for those who married relatively early. At the time of interview, one half of the younger men and four out of ten women had never married (Table 10.1). It seems reasonable to assume that those who married for the first time after the age of 28 - i.e., after the interview - more often than not had already left their home of origin.

If we look at the first union instead of the first marriage, the proportion that had neither moved out nor entered a union is much smaller. The proportion of the 1960 cohort who had never been cohabiting was 12 per cent for women and 22 per cent for men. Here, too, the two events are closer connected in the youngest than the oldest cohort. The concurrence of the first union and the final moving out increased from 33 to 39 per cent from the oldest to the youngest cohort of women, and from 26 to 34 per cent for the corresponding male cohorts (Table 10.2). In the 1960 cohort, the first union is overwhelmingly an unmarried cohabitation. As we will discuss later, this is probably perceived as a less decisive step than marriage.

Between 10 and 18 per cent had entered their first marriage or union before the final moving out. This is a mixed group for which we are unable to differentiate those who still lived with their family of origin when they got married or started a non-marital cohabitation, from those who had returned to their parents after a divorce or union break-up, and then moved out again.

Entering the labour market is decoupled from leaving the parental home for about nine out of ten members from the two post-war cohorts we are looking

at (Table 10.2). A large majority, about three out of four, started to work before their most recent moving out. In the 1960 cohort, every fifth male and every fourth female worker entered the labour force after their final departure from the parental home. This particular ordering of events was a little more infrequent in the 1945 cohort.

10.3.3   First union and marriage

The two cohorts of 1945 and 1960 have both contributed to the growth in modern cohabitation. As an element in the transition to adulthood, however, consensual unions have clearly been more important for the 1960 cohort. The intensity of entering consensual unions for this cohort was more than four times as high as for the 1945 cohort, among women and men alike (Blom, 1994). At 27 years of age, 68 per cent in the female 1960 cohort had consensual union experience, compared to 13 per cent of the 1945 cohort at the same age. The corresponding figures for men were 62 and 15 per cent.

For the youngest cohort, doubt may be raised as to whether first marriage may still be seen as an important event in the process to adulthood. At age 27, 41 per cent of the female 1960 cohort had never married, and more than half - 54 per cent - of the male cohort. At the same age, the proportions never married in the 1945 cohort were much smaller: 14 and 26 per cent for women and men, respectively. Much of the marriage gap between the two cohorts has, however, closed as the years went by. Register data show that the vast majority of the 1960 cohort also acquired marriage experience. At 37 years of age, 79 per cent of all of these women have entered marriage. Due to the sample selection effect in surveys, it seems reasonable to suppose that register data will normally come out with somewhat lower figures for marriage experience compared to survey information. Taking this into consideration, it seems safe to conclude therefore that within 10 years after the survey, the 1960 cohort had acquired at least as comprehensive a marriage experience as the 1945 cohort already had at the age of 27.

After the FFS in 1988, other surveys have demonstrated a further increase in the number of consensual unions. In addition, they have also showed a significant increase in the proportion not living in any union, whether marriage or a consensual union. This may partly be due to an increasing trend in the number of divorces and perhaps even more of "paperless" dissolutions, as consensual unions are dissolved 3-4 times more often than marriages. An additional explanation might be that younger cohorts postpone their entry into first union. This has, however, not been confirmed by more recent data (Texmon, 1999). Age at first consensual union seems to have remained rather unchanged for the cohorts born after 1960.

Analysis based on hazard regression shows that region of origin and religious affiliation affect the probability of entering a consensual union (Blom, 1994). The negative effect of coming from the Southern and Western part of the country was however statistically significant only for women. The effect of religious affiliation was also more pronounced among them than among men. Respondents who were religiously active had a significantly lower propensity to enter consensual unions. Introducing sexual debut as a time-varying covariate, the causal effect of religious affiliation weakened. Other covariates like place of origin (urban versus rural), socio-economic background and number of siblings seemed to have very little effect. For women, a long interval between sexual debut and first union increased the probability that the first union is non-marital rather than marital. No such effect was found for men.

The factor with the most pronounced effect in the 1945 cohort was educational level, for both sexes. For the two female cohorts, the effect of educational level was U-shaped. Less educated women as well as those with education at the highest level were most prone to enter a consensual union. For the male 1945 cohort, however, the probability of a first consensual union increased linearly with educational level. The behaviour of the male 1960 cohort was less influenced by this covariate. As expected, being pregnant or having a pregnant partner increased the intensity of consensual unions, but far less so than the intensity of marriage.

From these findings, Blom (1994) draws the conclusion that the social origin of the modern type of cohabitation in Norway seems to be rooted in two different segments of the population, the educated elite and the working class. He further assumes that for the next generation a social value dimension will have a major effect upon the choice between marriage and consensual union.

10.3.4   First childbirth

The well-known postponement of first childbirth and the increase in the number of births out-of-wedlock are clearly visible when looking at the 1945 and 1960 cohorts. Median age at first childbirth was 25,7 years for the female 1960 cohort, 2 years higher than for the 1945 cohort (Table 10.1). The increase in childless years during young adulthood did, however, continue further after the 1960 cohort. Comparing women born in 1950 and in 1973, the increase is 4 years, with a median age of 26.7 years in the latter cohort according to register data (Lappegård, 1998). The increase in first quartile ages has been more modest. This means that the intra-cohort differences have widened.

Table 10.2 (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in Norway, by gender and cohort

	Males Cohort		Females Cohort	
	1945	1960	1945	1960
Leaving the parental home and				
First union				
Most recent departure and first union simultaneously	26	34	33	39
Most recent departure after first union	16	12	18	13
Most recent departure before first union	58	54	49	48
Entry labour market				
Most recent departure and entry labour market simultaneously	10	6	8	11
Most recent departure after entry labour market	76	74	78	65
Most recent departure before entry labour market	14	20	14	24
First marriage and				
Leaving parental home				
Marriage and most recent departure simultaneously	30	31	37	55
Marriage before most recent departure	15	10	18	15
Marriage after most recent departure	55	59	45	30
First child				
First child before first marriage	11	25	10	19
First child after first marriage	89	75	90	81

Source: Family and Occupation Survey 1988, Division for Social and Demographic Research, Oslo

A group still entering motherhood early in adulthood consists of women with low education. Relative to the 1945 cohort, they constitute a much smaller proportion, but first, second and third quartile ages at first childbirth among them are approximately the same as among the 1945 cohort's women with low education.

When the women in the 1960 cohort were interviewed in 1988, 61 per cent had entered motherhood (Noack and Østby, 1996) . Only for these women do we have the opportunity to find out whether they were single, living in a consensual union or married at the time of their first childbirth. Register data show that at the age of 35, the proportion of this cohort having children had

increased to 84 per cent. Thus, cohabitational status at first childbirth is unknown for a considerable fraction (23 per cent) of the 1960 cohort. It seems reasonable to believe that cohabitational status at first childbirth varies with the age at first childbirth. The frequency of single motherhood is most frequent among less educated women, and among them the transition to motherhood takes place at a younger age. Our analysis of the proportion of the 1960 cohort women becoming single mothers, living in a consensual union or being married is thus preliminary, and possible comparisons with the 1945 cohort must therefore be performed with care. For men, who have not yet become fathers at the time of interview in even greater numbers, this is all the more the case.

Taking these reservations into consideration, we find a substantial decoupling of marriage and first childbearing. Of the 1960 female cohort, 39 per cent gave birth to their first child while out-of-wedlock, versus only 12 per cent of the 1945 cohort. The decoupling of marriage and motherhood is largely compensated by the fact that a larger proportion lives in consensual unions at first childbirth, namely 26 and 3 per cent, respectively, in the 1960 and 1945 cohorts. To start as a single mother was also somewhat more common in the 1960 cohort, but this difference may well disappear as a larger proportion of the 1960 cohort experience first childbirth.

10.4 | Two female cohorts: One standing on the barricades and one reaping the benefits?

We have seen that the transition to adulthood has changed much more for women than for men. Comparing the time spent on various activities, the women born in 1945 and 1960 show dissimilarities as well as amazing similarities. We only find significant differences in time spent on education and family care. The time which the oldest cohort saved by having less education, they spent on more family care activities. In terms of occupational work, if we only look at how many years they have accumulated until the age of 28, the two cohorts are surprisingly similar. The 1945 cohort's occupational work experience has more often been concentrated in the period either before or just after they set up a family, whereas the 1960 cohort to a much larger degree combined family and occupation.

The 1960 cohort spent somewhat more time living with a husband or non-marital partner than the 1945 cohort. However, the type of union may have more significant consequences than the exact duration of living together. For the 1945 cohort, the dominant type was a marital union with, therefore, a much stronger form of commitment. The 1960 cohort has been considerably more

free to experiment with consensual unions, and often with more than one period of cohabitation.

Becoming a parent may be seen as the ultimate step out of a youth period free of obligations. It is an irreversible event, which may easily overshadow the occurrence of other events in the process to adulthood. The timing of parenthood and its decoupling from marriage are two areas of life where the two cohorts are very dissimilar.

In some ways, the youngest cohort had a more fortunate historical time to live in. Many of the changes which the 1945 cohort had struggled for, were taken for granted when the 1960 cohort grew up. The 1945 cohort came a little too early to enjoy the fruits of some important new developments. They became sexually active just before modern contraceptive technology became available. They had their first sexual experience at a time when condoms were bought by postal order or rather discreetly at the hairdresser's. Women born during or just after the Second World War were among the most active when the new wave of women's movement broke through at the end of the 1960s. In Norway, however, many of the reforms that they fought for were not secured until after these women had become too old to derive major benefits from them. Self-determined abortion was introduced in 1979 and was thus useful only for the last half of their reproductive period. Until major improvements were achieved in the eighties, day nurseries were scarce and the period of paid leave from work in connection with childbirth and maternity was short (Rønsen and Sundström, 1996). By that time, most of the children of this female generation had passed the age where the parents could benefit from these more generous facilities. The substantial rise in divorce starting from the mid-1960s may be the only change in family events that this cohort did not miss out. Thirty years after they had entered marriage, more than every fourth of them had divorced. This is one of the highest frequencies of divorce that have ever been registered in any Norwegian marriage cohort.

Connecting cohort data to historical periods and events can sometimes be done in more colourful ways than most demographers are used to. In Norway, the cohorts born just after the Second World War are alternately referred to as "the 68 generation" and "the fat 50 year-olds". The reference to "68" stands for radical year 1968, while "the fat 50 year-olds" has a double meaning: the well-off generation demanding jeans size XXL. Our knowledge about the 1945 cohort's transition to adulthood may serve as a reminder that this is a simplified picture. When cohorts are labelled this way, the risk of going too far in stereotyping and generalising is obvious.

The 1945 cohort was 23 years old in 1968. In other words, they were at the appropriate age to stand on the barricades as radical students. However, our

data clearly show that only a minority did so. By that time the majority had already started a family in the traditional way. Given this situation, they were probably more concerned about the lack of housing, which indeed was a major problem for young couples at the time, than interested in what was going on at the universities.

When history was later written, there is no doubt that the radicals of 1968 were given a place too dominating in relation to the proportion of the cohorts that actually comprised them. Whether or not they are still considered as a deviant group, the label "68" seems sometimes also to have changed from being negative to positive. At their time, they were pictured as dangerous and misled radicals. Nowadays the impression is often given that their convictions and activities concerned a majority. When we seek historical sources, nuances and variety easily fade. This seems to happen even when referring to the not so distant past.

There may also be a reason to examine in more detail whether the radical minority of the so-called 1968 generation have been "forerunners" for the family life of later generations. If we look at the 1960 cohort, the women with a low level of education have definitely shown a different behaviour than higher educated and older women. Among women with a low level of education, the median age at first childbirth is the same for both cohorts. Among the less educated we have also observed a less positive attitude towards women's liberation than among the more educated (Ellingsæter, Noack and Rønsen, 1997). This may raise the question whether only women with higher or average education have benefited from the improved opportunities for women.

10.5 | Consensual unions and births out-of-wedlock: from deviant to accepted behaviour

Among the various demographic events which most people experience during the transition to adulthood, births out-of-wedlock and consensual unions occupy a distinct position. Looking at the last decades, these events do not merely represent a changing practice but even more a changing meaning of these social phenomena. We might say that births out-of-wedlock is an old concept in a new clothing, while consensual unions is a new concept which at the same time embodies many well-known features of marriage. In Norway as well as in several other countries, years have passed from the moment the first consensual unions became visible until the terminology became relatively standardised (Prinz, 1995). From the 1970s until the late 1980s, no single term describing unmarried cohabitation was dominating. Paperless marriages, marriage of conscience and cohabitation without wedding were a few of the

phrases used among professionals as well as in public. It is only during the last decade that the Norwegian language has incorporated more uniform words and phrases, with a word for consensual union - "samboerskap"- which is so common that an explanation is no longer required. It is a composite word meaning "living together".

Where quantitative facts from statistics fall short of providing an adequate understanding of the more substantive changes, jurisdiction and family and welfare policy may be used as additional sources of information. Therefore, we will now look at some examples of changes in family policy related to births out-of-wedlock and consensual unions.

Today, every fifth of all Norwegian couples are living in a consensual union. It may be maintained, however, that Sweden and Denmark are the real pioneers, and therefore the most interesting for studying consensual unions. The shift in cohabitational patterns caught on noticeably later in Norway (Brunborg 1979), but today there is hardly any difference between Denmark and Norway, with Swedish figures only slightly higher. Compared to other European countries, however, all three countries have high proportions of non-marital cohabitants (Klijzing and Macura, 1997; Ditch et al., 1998).

We cannot satisfactorily explain why the changes occurred noticeably later in Norway than in the other Scandinavian countries. One set of factors which may have restrained the growth of consensual unions could be the more scattered distribution of the population and the strong religious influence in the Southern and Western parts of the country. With religious activity lessening the probability of living in a consensual union, the frequency of unmarried cohabitation is still lowest in these regions.

Around 1850, one of the founding fathers of Norwegian sociology and demography, Eilert Sundt, travelled through the whole country performing his surveys. The quality of his detailed notes is as good as that of the same type of data gathered in modern days. His moral commitment was, however, worthy of a clergyman, which was also his original profession. His observation of the customs of unmarried cohabitation in a rural district in Eastern Norway made him assemble the common people in front of the church so as to lecture them. In his view the situation was so bad that he suggested the establishment of an organisation to promote information and to improve moral standards (Christophersen, 1962). Sundt's moral commitment was, however, slightly weakened when he saw more clearly why people lived together this way. Many of the unmarried unions that he noticed seemed to be relatively poor. Couples cohabiting but saving money to afford a high-class wedding were at least understandable to him, although he still perceived their union as unacceptable.

Other written sources describe how relationships between employers and employees, such as between a widower and his housekeeper, gradually developed into an unmarried union. Another basis for unmarried cohabitation has been described for the Northern parts of Norway, where fishermen used to be away from home for months and where the weather for long periods prevented wedding invitations to be sent out. In such cases, moving together without a formal marriage may have seemed the most practical thing to do.

Another source of information on consensual unions in earlier times is a book by an American judge (Lindsey and Wainwright, 1928). He spoke out boldly in favour of the companionate marriage, an unmarried cohabitation as a trial period before the final decision to marry and have children. His book triggered a fierce debate in a country even as far away as Norway. There is, however, no indication that many people decided to put his ideas into practice. The opposition he faced also at home may be illustrated by the fact that he was forced to resign from his office as judge.

These historical examples hardly explain why the modern form of consensual unions so easily gained foothold in Scandinavia. Upon closer examination, unmarried cohabitation has appeared in many countries, in one framing or another. However, the practice of unmarried cohabitation in previous eras may put into perspective what is happening in more recent times. Unmarried cohabitation in the 19th and the first part of the 20th century seemed to be limited to particular subgroups in the population. It is only in the last few decades of the latter that consensual unions have gained universal acceptance and spreading. Except for people who are particularly active religiously, we can hardly identify any major Norwegian subgroup where consensual unions are evidently less widespread than in the total population.

Especially in the first analyses of consensual unions (or "paperless marriages", as was the preferred term in the 1970s), consensual unions were typically perceived as a kind of engagement. The assumption of cohabitation as a substitute for engagement was consistent with the outcome of engagements. Engagement advertisements in the newspapers suddenly disappeared in the early seventies, and books on customary practices stopped including engagements in their descriptions of family events (Noack, 2001).

This assumption of consensual unions being a substitute for engagement is, however, not confirmed by a survey conducted in 1995/96. Surprisingly, this survey demonstrated that nearly 50 per cent of young women born in the late 1960s (and maximum 26 years of age at the time of the interview) said that they either were or had been engaged (Figure 10.3). Further analysis based on logistic regression showed that engagement was not restricted to certain groups (like religious active people), but was rather evenly distributed.

Engagement was, however, not as frequent as a generation ago when about 8 out of 10 passed through this event on their way towards union formation (Noack, 2001).

The survey also showed that engagements were rather frequent among non-marital couples, with 4 out of 10 of them saying that they were engaged. In Norway, it has not been customary to announce engagement and the date for marriage simultaneously. When a couple got engaged, they were not asked whether they intended to marry, but when the wedding was going to take place. The close connection between engagement and marriage was also demonstrated by common attitudes with respect to breaking an engagement, which was ill-seen. Therefore, books on customary practices from the 1960s recommended that young couples not absolutely sure of their future relationship rather enter into a so-called secret engagement.

Considering the traditional role of engagement in the process towards marriage, it seemed reasonable to consider engagement among non-marital couples as a possible indicator of the proportion who sooner or later would prefer to transform their relationship into marriage. In the first survey, engaged couples were not asked whether they intended to marry. Based on knowledge available at the time, this question seemed unnecessary or almost ridiculous. But listening to the young generations' narratives on engagements, we noticed that they did not make the traditionally close connection between engagement and marriage. In the next survey, we therefore made sure that engaged couples were also asked whether they intended to marry. It appeared that 56 per cent intended to marry, 26 per cent had no plans to marry and 18 per cent did not know. In other words, an engagement today is no longer a clear-cut signal to the surroundings that a wedding is coming up soon. This change is in accordance with Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's (1995) theory that behaviours and attitudes with respect to family life have become more differentiated. The reality behind seemingly straightforward terms as *family* or *parenthood*, and in our example *engagement*, reflects more diversity than the earlier connotations of these terms. In other words, the normal biography - the proper way of establishing a family - has weakened. Instead, there is more individual freedom in choosing engagement or not, and more freedom in framing it.

The Norwegian cohorts born in the 1970s have more liberal views of non-marital cohabitation than the cohorts born in the 1960s had at the same age (Noack, 2001). But very few, only 4 per cent, hold to the view that cohabitation is always preferable to marriage. Until 1972, the Norwegian Penal Code had a paragraph called the "concubinage paragraph", prohibiting unmarried cohabitation. Although there are hardly any examples that the law was ever fully enforced, it obviously had the function of propagating this

norm. Current literature on cohabitation in Norway often refers to this paragraph, mostly to illustrate the contrast between past and present attitudes.

As is well known, the connection between laws, attitudes and behaviour is rarely a one-way relationship. The development in Norway during the last decades gives evidence to the fact that society has adapted to the increasing number of consensual unions, but the arguments have been various and partly conflicting. One political aim has been to protect the weaker part in such a relationship, like children. Another aim has been to prevent consensual unions from becoming more profitable than marriages, as illustrated by the debates on rules for taxation, pensions and social security. At the same time, lawmakers have tried to avoid excessive legislation for persons who wanted to stay outside society's regulations of private life. Most changes in laws and rules have taken place during the last 10-15 years. With regard to taxes and pensions, Norwegian cohabiting couples with common children, or those who have previously been married to each other, are practically equalled to married couples. Due to the Norwegian family number system, cohabiting couples with common children are easily identified. This has probably also contributed to the regulations for this group of cohabiting couples. During the last few years, lawmakers have put emphasis on reducing possible advantages that unmarried couples with children might have over married couples. To achieve this goal, a system based on self-written declaration has been used. Those who declare that they have been living in a consensual union during 12 of the last 18 months now loose the privilege of an extra child allowance. This declaration must be repeated every year. This means that society has chosen to consider a large group of consensual unions as an equivalent to marriage, taking for granted that these couples have the duty to mutually support each other economically, a duty which is legally restricted to married couples.

In the first decades after the Second World War, the timing of marriage and first childbirth was close. Approximately one half of married women gave birth to their first child within 7 months of marriage. Another one-fourth had their first child within 18 months of marriage. The younger the women, the earlier the birth of the first child.

Common words and phrases demonstrate the normative pressure behind this connection. In Norwegian, the term "to have to get married" nicely illustrates this normative pressure. Although comprehensive rights for children born out-of -wedlock were secured early in the 20th century, there was little social acceptance of having children without being married. A large proportion of unmarried mothers married soon after childbirth, either with the child's father or with some other man (Øyen, 1966).

The connection between marriage and pregnancy was, however, more complicated than indicated by the term "to have to get married". We may assume that couples who had already more or less decided to get married did not feel such an urgent need to avoid pregnancy. The pregnancy may often have determined the timing of marriage rather than the decision to marry itself.

In the late 1960s, it once happened that a young unmarried mother who openly cohabited with the father of her child lost the special economic support which unmarried mothers were entitled to. She appealed the decision and won the trial, which was based on her formal marital status as a single mother. The decision caused a storm of protests, and three years later the law was changed, disfavouring unmarried couples. Later on, several other laws and rules for social welfare benefits have also been modified, basing the rules on the actual cohabitational status. This has created a need for more knowledge about these groups. But even today, Norwegian birth statistics only allow to distinguish between children born within and outside marriage. The most recent figures are 51.2 per cent of births in-wedlock and 48.9 per cent out-of-wedlock.

In order to identify births to single mothers as well as to unmarried and married couples, respectively, we have to either use survey data or a register which was primarily established to study disease and injury related to pregnancy and childbirth. In this register, data on cohabitational status - imperfect as they may be - seem to give a fairly good picture of the development. According to this register, 42 per cent of all children born in 1998 had mothers living in a consensual union, while 7 per cent of the mothers were single (Medical Birth Registry of Norway, 1999). The proportion of unmarried cohabitating mothers has increased substantially. A little more than 10 years ago, only 16 per of the mothers were living in a consensual union. Over the same period there has been a small decrease in the number of single mothers, from 12 per cent to today's level of around 7 per cent. Although Norway's official birth register does not contain information on the number of children born in a consensual union, family statistics show how many children are living with parents who cohabit without marriage. Today, about four out of five couples living with children are married, while one-fifth is living in a consensual union.

10.6 | Discussion and conclusions

Inter-cohort comparisons as we have given an example of in this chapter are strictly speaking easy to organise. Admittedly, the data will often have to be reorganised, but countries with regular censuses and current population statistics usually have good access to demographic data in time series. In some countries, like Norway, there are also various other registers as well as a

population registration system in which each person is assigned a unique identification number. However, the last decades' changes in family patterns, including those affecting the process to adulthood, confront demographic analyses with major problems, as official population statistics have been insufficiently adjusted to the changing behaviour.

The lack of correspondence between population statistics and actual behaviour may be partly due to a time lag between recognising the need for adjustments and implementing them. Deficient opportunities to separate single mothers from those living in consensual unions, even in countries where births out-of-wedlock have increased vigorously for a long time, are a good example of such a time lag. Deficient or absent statistics about consensual unions, their incidence as well as prevalence, are another example. We might, however, suspect that this is not merely due to a time lag. Consensual unions represent an event which is unregistered by its very nature and difficult to capture by methods other than survey data. Some countries have gradually utilised censuses to get information about consensual unions, and a few countries may make use of their detailed dwelling registers. Still, deficient updating, lack of regularity and under-estimation represent considerable problems.

Analyses of the process to adulthood raise the question whether we are dealing here with a development characterised by de-chronologisation, less age standardisation and decoupling of events which traditionally have been closely linked. In addition, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) also point out a decoupling and differentiation of behaviours and attitudes. In such a process, everyday terms as family, marriage and engagement may disguise growing diversities. Engagement can hardly be interpreted as a demographic event, but it is a traditional step in the process of establishing a union which, according to our data, is still pretty common. We hypothesise that engagement is also a fairly typical example of a decoupling between behaviour and attitudes. Today, engagement is obviously no longer governed by the same norms as some decades ago. Neither is there any evidence that traditional norms have been replaced by a new set of uniform values and expectations. The present situation is probably more characterised by individual decisions, with prominent and well-known connections between behaviour and attitudes becoming increasingly blurred. Consensual unions may, however, represent a more clear-cut status. In Norwegian, we now have a new term for them that puts into evidence the dissimilarity with the unmarried unions of previous times. As various authors have pointed out (Villeneuve-Gokalp 1991; Kiernan and Estaugh 1993; Manting 1996), the phrase "consensual union" may denote quite different types of cohabitation. This should be examined in more detail.

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Figure 10.1. Mean population under education. Females and males,
             born 1945 and 1960
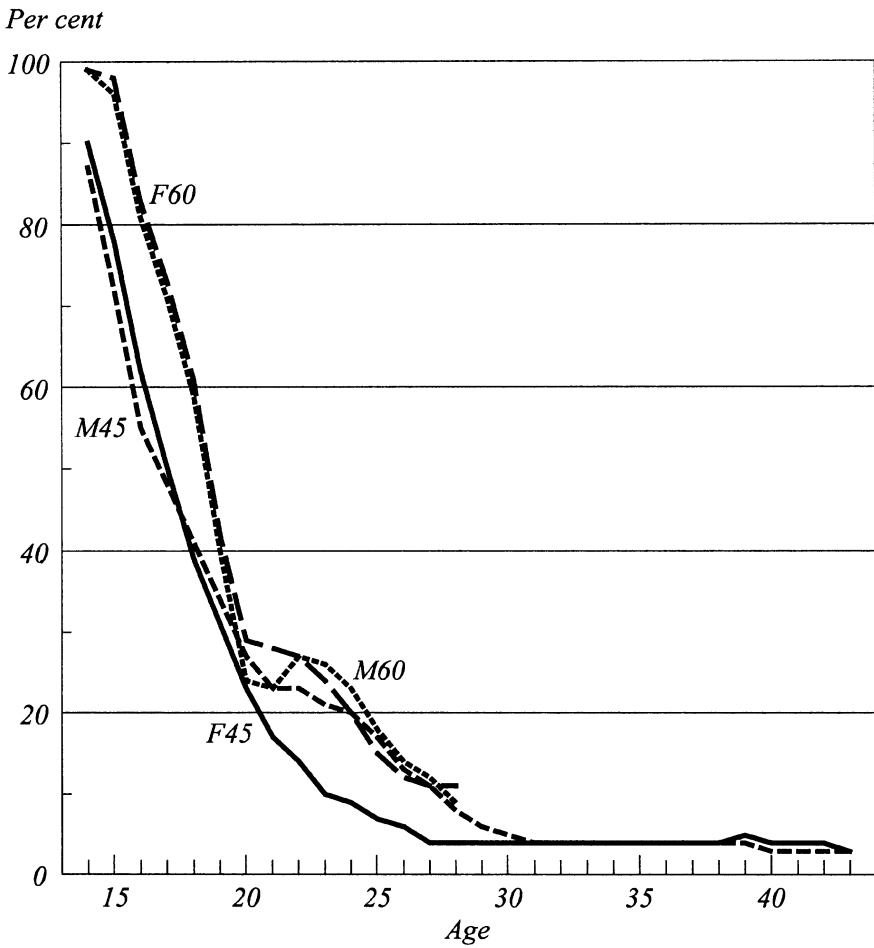
Per cent

Figure 10.2. Mean population in the labour force. Females and males,
            born 1945 and 1960
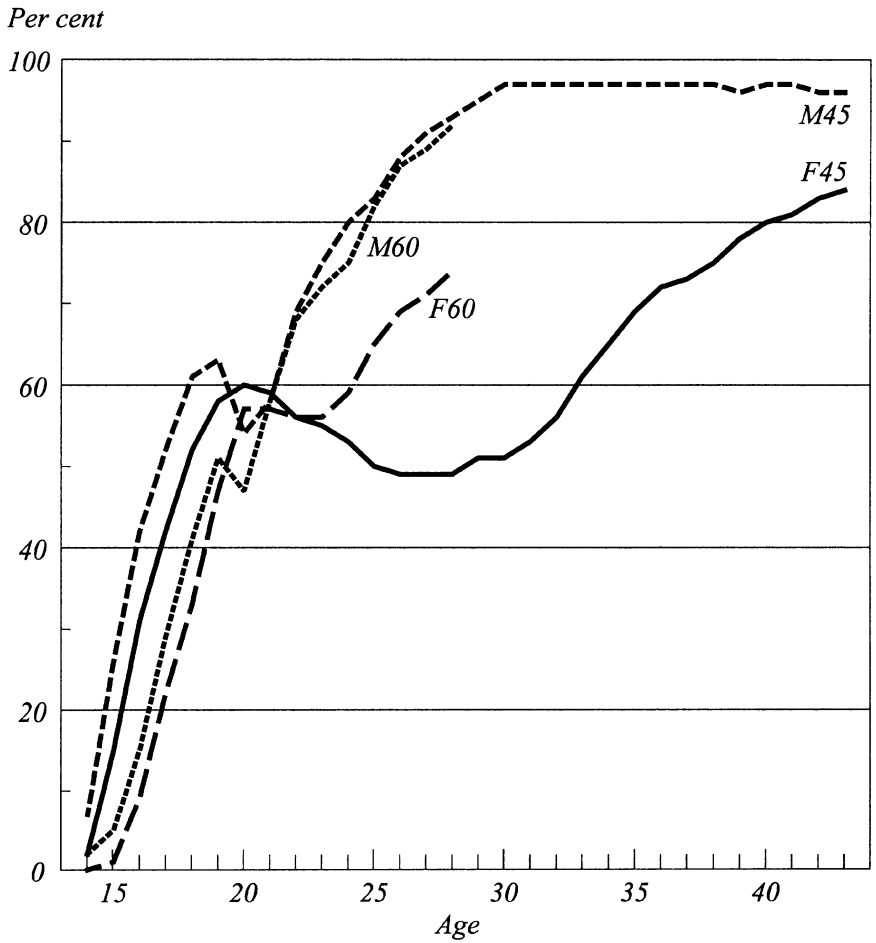
Per cent

Figure 10.3. Cumulative percentage of females who had their first engage-
ment, by age and cohort

Per cent
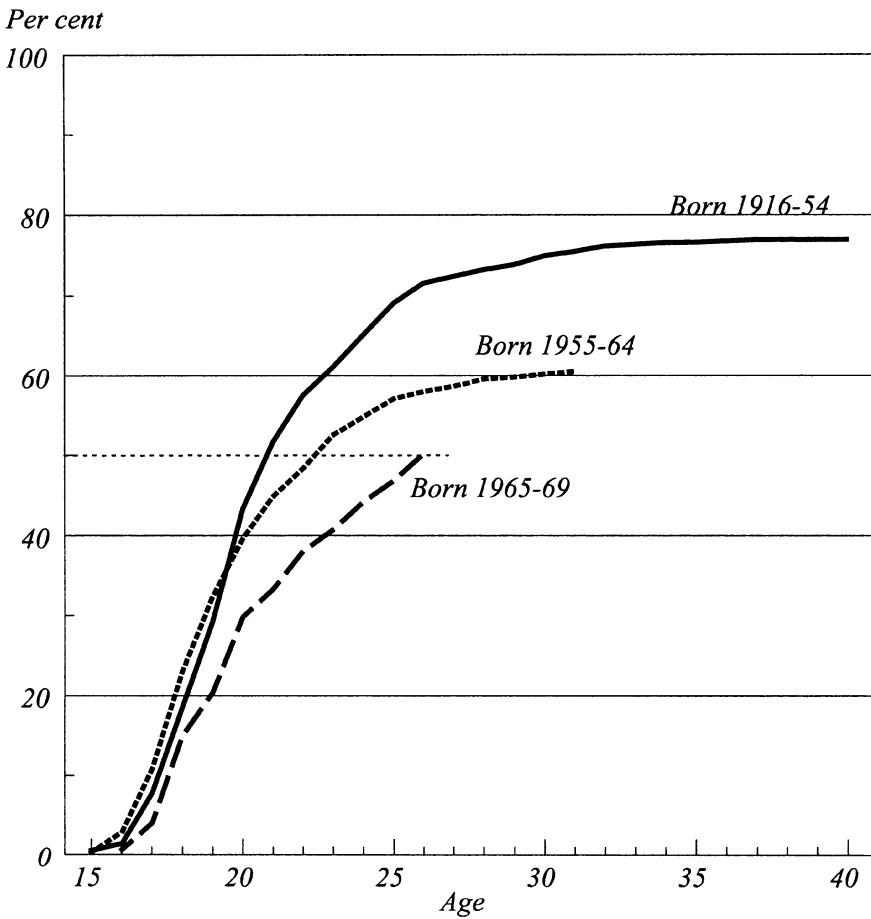
11. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN POLAND — — —

IRENA KOWALSKA AND WIKTORIA WRÓBLEWSKA

11.1 | Introduction

Poland is experiencing large-scale social and economic changes as a result
of the reforms associated with the transition to a market economy. The main
social changes began in 1988 and 1989. At the beginning of the 1990s, a
first round of economic reforms resulted in a deterioration of the situation
for large parts of the population. The impact of the new socio-economic
situation on family formation was initially not clear. On the one hand, the
changes - especially the earlier political ones - created rising expectations
among the population. As a result, young adults may have cherished a new
perspective on family life. On the other hand, the economic reforms result-
ing in a deterioration of the situation for large parts of the population may
have created increased uncertainty about labour market opportunities and
other future developments. This uncertainty could, therefore, also have led
to a postponement of family formation, especially during the 1990s
(Liefbroer and Frątczak, 1996).

At the end of the 1980s, the following facts and features regarding Polish
patterns of family formation stood out. Marriage remained the basis for
family life, with children born mainly within it. In 1988 non-marital births
represented only 5.8 per cent of all live births, a slight increase from 4.7 per
cent at the beginning of the 1980s. During that same decade the number of
contracted marriages declined, mainly due to the changes in the number of
persons in successive cohorts who entered the marriage market. The princi-
pal cause of marriage dissolution was the death of one spouse: almost 80 per
cent of all dissolutions in 1988 occurred for this reason. Other than that, the

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divorce rate was very low: on average 194 unions per 1000 newly con-
tracted marriages dissolved due to divorce. With a total of 2,126 children
per woman in 1988, fertility remained above replacement level. The gross
reproduction rate amounted to 1,034.

At the end of the decade, some demographic changes set in, although ini-
tially at a very low pace. For instance, in the early 1990s, the patterns of
family formation did not differ much yet from the previous ones. In the
middle of this decade, however, some new demographic changes unfolded
which have continued up to now. Since the data presented in this chapter
come from 1991, they concern the socio-demographic behaviour of young
adults at the beginning of the economic transition. Consequently, they may
not show any signs of the significant changes resulting from the socio-
economic reforms.

11.2 | Data and methods

The Polish Fertility and Family Survey (FFS) took place in November and
December of 1991. The National Population Census of 1988 formed the
sampling frame for the Polish FFS. The sample was selected in two stages:
first, districts were randomly chosen; then, dwelling units in these districts
were drawn. Special sampling procedures developed by the Central Statisti-
cal Office were utilised to carry out these steps.

The final sample consisted of all persons aged 18-49 years and living in the
4,313 households drawn this way. In total 8,546 persons were interviewed,
of whom 4,211 were women and 4,335 men. Age eligibility was determined
as of 31 December 1991 (Holzer and Kowalska, 1997).

Two questionnaires were used. A preliminary household form contained
questions concerning the characteristics of the household and the basic per-
sonal characteristics of all household members. The second form was used
for the collection of detailed data from individuals aged 18-49 years who
lived in these households. The format, range and organisation of the ques-
tions reflected both earlier recommendations of the ECE/PAU and the need
for comparability with previous surveys conducted by the Central Statistical
Office and the Institute of Statistics and Demography of the Warsaw School
of Economics. The most important departures from the PAU model ques-
tionnaire were: (1) interviews were conducted with both partners (wife and
husband) in case of a married couple; (2) questions concerning the fertility
history were put to women only; (3) no direct questions were asked con-
cerning sterilisation (which is not permitted in Poland); and (4) optional
questions on population policy acceptance were not included.

Overall, the level of non-response was low, even lower than for other surveys conducted by the Central Statistical Office. Hence, the sample can be considered representative of the country as a whole. It is an appropriate basis for conclusions about changes in Polish attitudes and behaviours concerning nuptiality and reproduction in the early period of the transition to a free market economy. The analysis reported in this chapter is based on data obtained from the 6,180 respondents belonging to the five cohorts born in 1947-51, 1952-56, 1957-61, 1962-66 and 1967-71.

The Polish FFS collected among other things data on nine biographic events. The following five may be considered as a part of the transition to adulthood and are, as such, presented in the chapter: completion of formal education, first entry into the labour market, first leaving the parental home, first marriage, and first parenthood. The timing of these various events was measured by the year and month in which they took place.

The analysis of the transition to adulthood in Poland is based on the methods and measures agreed upon by the group of authors contributing to this volume. The following tools were used: survival functions at specific ages, probability density and hazard rates, quartiles and inter-quartile ranges, sequence and intervals between two events, logistic regression and Cox regression.

The following variables were selected as covariates for event history analysis: gender (stratified), number of children in the family of origin, parental divorce, place of residence at the age of 15, completed education, and level of religiosity (measured by frequency of church attendance). The categories of each of these covariates are indicated in Table 11.3, which presents the risks of each of them relative to the (omitted) reference category. In these models, a distinction is made between events occurring at age 22 – the modal for most of them - or before, and those occurring in general.

11.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

11.3.1 End of educational enrolment

When analysing data on education in Poland, it is important to keep in mind the following. The timing of completing education is closely linked with the Polish educational system. It comprises four stages of education: *primary*, with schooling lasting 8 years; *basic vocational*, with 3 years of schooling; *secondary general or vocational*, with 4 or 5 years of studying, respectively; and *tertiary*, with 4 or 5 years. According to data from the National Population and Household Census of 1988, 44 per cent of all persons aged 15 and

over reached primary education, 24 per cent completed basic vocational training, each fourth person completed secondary school, and 7 per cent reached tertiary education.

Until the end of the 1980s, the education ratios did not differ significantly from those in the previous decades, but the situation started to change considerably as of the beginning of the 1990s. While in the school year 1990-91, only 16 per cent of youth aged 19-24 were enrolled in post-secondary and tertiary education, in the year 1997-1998 this frequency doubled to 34 per cent. Bearing this in mind, one should not expect any remarkable educational expansion for the cohorts of persons who completed their education before the start of the socio-economic transition.

In Figure 11.1, data on the timing of the exit from educational enrolment are shown separately for men and women, as well as for distinctive cohorts. In Table 11.1, the same results are presented by quartile percentages. Both these graphical and numerical results justify the following conclusions. As regards the timing of the completion of schooling, differences between men and women were rather small (about half a year). There are more young men completing vocational school at the age of 17-18 than women, who more often attended secondary school to exit from them at the age of 18-19. Thereafter, gender differences in the distribution of age at leaving school widen.

More persons in the older cohorts were still enrolled in education at the age of 25 (see % not at age 25, Table 11.1) . This means that older persons continued studying in older age (mostly as part-time students), after a break in education. The longer enrolment in education across cohorts can be observed for both men and women, but the differences are rather small (about half a year). The median age (Q2) at exit from education in the consecutive cohorts of men remained at 18.2-18.3 years, but it fluctuated between 18.7 and 19.2 years across women's cohorts. Simultaneously, from the older to the younger cohorts, the level of the third quartile (Q3) declined, which is related to the higher proportion of youth enrolled in tertiary education.

Table 11.1 *Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in Poland, by gender and cohort (in years)*

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1952-56	1957-61	1962-66	1967-71	1952-56	1957-61	1962-66	1967-71
End of educational enrol-ment								
Q1*	17.5	17.6	17.7	17.8	18.0	17.7	17.8	17.9
Q2	18.2	18.3	18.2	18.3	19.2	18.9	18.9	18.7
Q3	20.5	20.4	20.0	-	21.1	20.8	20.4	-
Q3-Q1	3.0	2.8	2.3	-	3.1	3.1	2.6	-
% not at age 25	(10)	(5)	(2)	-	(8)	(5)	(3)	-
Entry into labour market								
Q1	17.7	17.8	18.0	18.0	18.4	18.2	18.4	18.3
Q2	18.6	18.7	18.8	18.7	19.7	19.5	19.6	19.4
Q3	20.3	20.6	20.7	21.2	21.8	21.8	21.2	-
Q3-Q1	2.6	2.8	2.7	3.2	3.4	3.6	2.8	-
% not at age 25	(6)	(6)	(5)	-	(13)	(13)	(9)	-
Leaving the parental home								
Q1	21.7	21.9	22.6	22.9	20.0	19.8	20.0	19.8
Q2	24.6	25.6	26.6	-	22.4	22.5	22.8	-
Q3	-	-	-	-	27.2	28.5	-	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	-	7.2	8.7	-	-
% not at age 30	(29)	(37)	-	-	(19)	(22)	-	-
First marriage								
Q1	22.7	23.1	23.1	-	20.3	20.2	20.4	20.1
Q2	24.6	25.5	25.1	-	22.3	22.2	22.4	24.6
Q3	28.3	-	-	-	25.4	25.5	25.3	-
Q3-Q1	5.6	-	-	-	5.1	5.3	4.9	-
% not at age 30	(21)	(28)	-	-	(14)	(16)	-	-
First child birth								
Q1	-	-	-	-	21.3	21.0	21.1	21.0
Q2	-	-	-	-	23.6	23.0	23.2	-
Q3	-	-	-	-	26.6	26.6	26.8	-
Q3-Q1	-	-	-	-	5.3	5.6	5.7	-
% not at age 30	-	-	-	-	(13)	(14)	-	-

Source: Polish Fertility and Family Survey (1991), Institute of Statistics and Demography, Warsaw.

*Q1, Q2 and Q3 are first, second and third quartiles, respectively.

11.3.2   First job

Data in Table 11.1 show that a large majority of young Poles start working after finishing their education. The longer enrolment in education goes hand-in-hand with later entry into the labour market. The calculated probability density function shows that men enter first jobs earlier than women, although the difference in timing is not very big. The highest density of starting a first job is among men aged 17-18: each fourth person starts a job at this age (this coincides with completing basic vocational training). Similarly, the highest values of the probability density function among women are registered for those who start their first job at the age of 18 years and beyond. At the age of 25, almost all men (97 per cent) have experienced entry into the labour market, while among women every tenth person had not yet undertaken any work by that age. It is noteworthy that in relative terms, fewer women from the younger cohorts have started any first job at the age of 25 compared with those from the older cohorts (9 per cent for those born in 1962-1966 against 13 per cent for those born 10 years earlier).

The increase in Q1, Q2 and Q3 values - among men mostly - reveals the postponement of starting a first job by those who entered the labour market earliest: early starters nowadays do so at increasingly later ages. One in four women born in 1947-51 (figures not shown) started their first job at an age that was 0,8 year lower than among the cohort born in 1962-1966; for men the corresponding differential is 0.7 year. Either the Q2 (median) or Q3 values for the latter show also a slightly rising trend, but not so for women.

11.3.3   Leaving the parental home

The FFS findings reveal that in Poland, the first time when young people leave the parental home differs little from when they move out for good. This is in marked contrast to countries in the West (Gierveld, Liefbroer, Beekink, 1991) and North (see Noack, this volume). The cumulative percentage of Polish women who had left their parental home by a given age shows that over one-quarter had moved out by the time they turned 20. On the whole, men tended to leave their parents later than women.

The values of the probability density function show that the event of leaving the parental home by Polish young people starts at the age of 15. At the age of 18-19, the rates of departure from home increase sharply; this is linked mainly with attending education at the tertiary level. The next increase for women is at ages 19-21, and at ages 22-25 for men; this is determined foremost by entry into first marriage.

The proportion of persons still living with their parents at the agę of 30 increases across the birth cohorts, in particular among men (Table 11.1). At that age, almost 37 per cent of men and 22 per cent of women in the cohort 1957-61 had not yet moved away from the parental home. Over time, the median age at which both women and men move out of the parental home has also increased. This is especially evident among men. For them it went up from 24.5 years in the cohort born in 1947-51 to 26.6 years in the cohort of 1962-66. Corresponding figures for women are 22.2 and 22.8 years of age.

These gender differences in the timing of leaving the parental home are strongly connected with entry into first marriage. Since Polish women marry generally at an earlier age than men, they leave the parental home earlier as well. Overall, between two-thirds and three-fourths of all men and women experience both events at the same time, i.e. within 6 months of each other (Table 11.2); this proportion increases across cohorts. Only around 15 per cent of women and 9 per cent of men depart from home before marriage: this trend is declining. And only about one in five women and one in four men do so after marriage. If one compares the time at leaving the parental home with that at entering the labour market, one can observe that there is no strong connection between these two events. In general, only some 8 to 9 per cent of all men and women experience these two events at the same time. The majority of them become professionally active once they are outside the parental home.

11.3.4   First marriage

A relatively strong tendency in Poland to marry directly, i.e. without premarital cohabitation, is noteworthy. In all cohorts, the predominant choice was to start with marriage, and only a tiny minority cohabited before. By age 25, on average about 7 out of 10 women and around 5 out of 10 men had started a first partnership directly with marriage, while only 1 in 20 women and even fewer men entered a consensual union as their first partnership (Holzer and Kowalska, 1997).

The age of young persons at entry into first marriage is differentiated by gender, but it did not change remarkably between the oldest and the youngest cohorts. Around one out of four women enter a marriage at the age of 20 or earlier, and over three-quarters do this before their 25th birthday. Polish men marry at a later age than women. Each fourth man marries at the age of 23 or below, and three out of four of them experience wedding at the age of 28 or earlier. The differences in age at entry into first marital union between women and men are related to legal regulations: in accordance with the Polish family and guardian code, which was in force up to the year 1998,

only women aged at least 18 years and men aged at least 21 years were entitled to marry. Since the end of 1998, the legal age of 18 years applies to both.

In general, one out of four men and one out of six women remained single at the age of 30, but this proportion increases from the older to the younger cohorts, in particular among men. While of the cohort born in 1947-51, 19 per cent of men and 12 per cent of women were still single at the age of 30, in the cohort born in 1957-61 these proportions had increased to 28 and 16 per cent, respectively (Table 11.1). These upward trends indicate an apparent postponement of entry into first marriage in younger cohorts, which is typical of the second demographic transition. There is a small but steady rise across cohorts in the median age at entry into first marriage. The inter-quartile range (Q3-Q1) does not increase remarkably, remaining at the level of about 5 years for both women and men.

11.3.5 Entry into parenthood

In comparison with the other transitions described thus far, the path to parenthood in Poland is far less age-dependent. The cumulative proportion of mothers who have had a live birth at a definite age has not changed much. There is a slight increase in the proportion of childless women at the age of 30 (13 per cent in the cohort of 1952-56 against 15 per cent in the cohort of 1962-66). It is not easy to say whether childlessness as reported was voluntary or involuntary. Although data on the ideal number of children indicate that at the beginning of the 1990s in Poland only about two per cent of adult persons preferred no children at all (Holzer and Kowalska, 1997), there are no other appropriate data to confirm or reject a hypothesis on voluntary or involuntary childlessness.

The patterns of childbearing among Polish women before the beginning of the socio-economic transition are reflected in a small but consistent increase in the inter-quartile range (Table 11.1). The slight postponement of child-bearing is only noticeable for the third quartile (Q3) which rose from 26.4 years for the oldest cohort to 26.8 years for the youngest.

First childbearing comes after first marriage. For 90 per cent of all women, entry into marriage precedes first childbearing (Table 11.2). The slight decline in the proportion of women in the more recent cohorts who have a child before marriage may indicate that this is more and more a free choice. Vital statistics data confirm this. The proportion of extra-marital births increased from 6 per cent at the beginning of the 1990s to 11 per cent in 1997.

Table 11.2 (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in Poland, by gender and cohort

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1952-56	1957-61	1962-66	1967-71	1952-56	1957-61	1962-66	1967-71
Leaving the parental home and								
first union								
=	8	7	8	10	12	14	14	12
<	67	68	67	58	56	54	49	53
>	26	26	25	32	33	32	37	36
entry labour market								
=	6	7	8	12	8	9	11	13
<	80	78	76	66	68	67	67	65
>	14	15	16	21	24	25	23	22
Marriage and leaving paren-tal home								
=	69	65	73	76	62	63	69	78
<	23	26	22	20	19	21	21	14
>	8	9	5	5	20	16	10	9
first union								
=	20	19	22	26	37	40	38	41
<	72	74	71	67	50	49	49	47
>	8	7	7	8	13	11	13	12
first child								
=	-	-	-	-	5	5	4	8
<	-	-	-	-	90	88	90	90
>	-	-	-	-	6	8	5	2

Source: Polish Fertility and Family Survey (1991), Institute of Statistics and Demography, Warsaw

= both events occurred within 6 months of each other
< first event preceded second by more than 6 months
> first event followed second after more than 6 months

11.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

11.4.1 Leaving the parental home

The FFS findings presented in Table 11.3 show the differences in the risk of experiencing the selected events on the path to adulthood across various covariates. These findings pertain to all cohorts born in the period 1947-1971. They lead to the following conclusions.

First, leaving the parental home is different for men and women. Women moved out earlier than men. Their risk of leaving the parental home was twice as high as that of men. This difference is mainly connected with further education after completion of primary or secondary school and with earlier marriage. A cohort effect indicates that younger men (aged 22 years

or less) increasingly postpone their departure from the parental home. For women this postponement is less evident. No factor is cohort-specific; throughout all cohorts, factors clearly keep the same (weak or strong) effect.

Characteristics of the parental home have stronger effect on the timing of leaving the parental home among women than among men. The lower the fertility in their family of origin, the higher their tendency to stay at home. Among respondents without siblings, at the age of 25 almost 58 per cent of men and 45 per cent of women are still living with their parents. At the age of 30, these proportions amount to 41 and 35 per cent, respectively. Among respondents with 3 or more siblings, only 44 per cent of men and 26 per cent of women had not yet left the parental home at the age of 25, while at the age of 30 these percentages are 28 and 18 per cent, respectively. With regard to parental divorce, the expectation that this would lead to an early departure was weakly confirmed for sons. On daughters this experience has a stronger impact; for them parental divorce entails a higher risk of leaving home early. n Polish conditions, the place of residence is a factor which has a strong impact on the timing of the transition to adulthood. As regards leaving the parental home, the highest risk in general is found among women who live in rural areas, while the lowest among those in the largest cities.

Only the highly educated young men, once they have completed school, leave the parental home more often and sooner. The risk of leaving the parental home for highly educated men is twice as high as it is for persons with primary education. At the age of 22 years, this risk is even 3,6 times higher. The higher the religiosity, the higher the risk to leave the parental home later. There are no clear differences between men and women in this respect.

11.4.2   First marriage

The marriage risk slightly decreases with each cohort (Figure 11.1). Men in the younger cohorts (1957-61) have a smaller marriage risk than those from the older cohorts (1947-51). Among women, the cohort changes are not so visible.

The estimates in Table 11.3 show that parental home characteristics as measured by the number of children born to the respondent's mother do not have any significant impact on the timing of first marriage, with the exception perhaps of women born in larger families: the higher the number of siblings, the earlier their entry into first marriage (relative risk of 1.40).

Being raised or not by both parents at least until the age of 15 does not have a clear-cut effect on marriage rates of men in general. However, women who have been brought up in incomplete families apparently are more willing to enter into marriage, especially before age 22, than those raised in complete families.

Being enrolled in education is generally considered incompatible with marriage, among other things because it still means a high degree of economic dependence on the parents. Finishing education can thus be seen as an immediate cause for marriage. Among women, enrolment in education has a strongly negative impact on their marriage rate. The postponement of marriage is related to the longer enrolment in education and, as such, confined to the transition period from adolescence to adulthood. Being enrolled reduces the marriage risk particularly in younger ages (≤ 22 years).

Liefbroer and Frątczak (1996) have stated, on the basis of Polish FFS findings, that the enrolment in education has a much stronger impact on the risk of entry into first marriage among women as compared to men. Highly educated women who initially had very low marriage rates during their enrolment in education, seem after finishing school very often to be inclined to start their family formation at this very moment, thus compensating for their earlier postponement of marriage (Corijn, Liefbroer and Gierveld, 1996).

There are also differences in the relative marriage risks of men and women according to their completed level of education (Table 11.3). Among the highest educated women, the chance of remaining single is remarkably higher than among those with lower levels of education. Indeed, at the age of 30, these proportions amount to 19 per cent for women with tertiary education and to 13 per cent for women with only primary education.

The same conclusions concerning the postponement of first marriages can also be drawn on the basis of data on the timing of this event: entry into first union at age 22 or earlier (Table 11.3). Among men with higher education, the relative risk of entry into marriage at that age (0.36) versus men with primary education only (1.00) is almost three times lower, and more than two times lower as compared to men with secondary education (0.75). Among women, the difference in this risk between highly educated women versus those with primary education only is even higher (4 times).

There is also the impact of female activity status on marriage timing, which varies with age (Liefbroer and Frątczak, 1996). Among women, the relative risk for those employed versus those studying strongly decreases with age. The risk of early entry into first marriage (at the age of 20 and below) is two times higher among working than among studying women. From age 25

Table 11.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Poland: relative risks (in general and for age 22 and less)

	Males						Females					
	Leaving the parental home		First marriage		First parenthood*		Leaving the parental home		First marriage		First parenthood	
	in general	22 ≤	in general	22 ≤	in general	22 ≤	in general	22 ≤	in general	22 ≤	in general	22 ≤
Educational level[a]												
vocational	1.22	1.10	1.16	0.96	-	-	1.10	1.14	1.14	1.27	0.94	0.95
secondary	1.33	1.51	1.16	0.75	-	-	1.00	0.87	0.81	0.65	0.63	0.41
tertiary	2.04	3.61	1.11	0.36	-	-	1.25	1.33	0.60	0.26	0.45	0.12
Place of residence[b]												
small town	1.13	1.12	1.15	1.35	-	-	0.86	0.80	0.97	0.89	1.04	0.91
medium town	1.28	1.11	1.13	1.66	-	-	0.86	0.80	0.87	0.91	0.90	0.97
large town	1.08	0.56	1.09	1.08	-	-	0.65	0.48	0.84	0.75	0.85	0.72
Number of children in the family of origin[c]												
2-3	1.41	1.48	1.13	1.09	-	-	1.53	1.30	1.14	1.15	1.23	1.27
4 and more	1.59	1.97	1.14	1.17	-	-	1.78	1.89	1.14	1.40	1.34	1.55
Parental home[d]												
no divorce in parental home	1.02	0.78	1.03	0.87	-	-	0.79	0.69	.89	0.77	0.92	0.57
Religiosity[e]												
irregularly practising	1.04	1.48	0.95	1.35	-	-	1.08	1.32	1.06	1.39	1.07	1.45
non-practising	1.11	1.97	0.98	1.54	-	-	1.30	1.51	1.13	1.32	1.06	1.50

[a] reference category = primary; [b] reference category = village; [c] reference category = 1 child [d] reference category = divorce or separation ; [e] reference category = regularly practising * no parenthood history for men

Source. Polish Fertility and Family Survey (1991), Institute of Statistical and Demography, Warsaw

onwards, their respective marriage risks hardly diverge. The relative mar-riage risk of employed versus unemployed women does not change by age. Having a paid job or not leads to a similar marriage risk at all ages. The ex-tremely low relative marriage risks of students - whether working or not - result from their young age.

Among the other determinants of the risk and timing of marriage, the place of residence is noteworthy. As concerns the timing of entering a first mar-riage early (at the age 22 or below), the risk is highest among men living in medium-sized towns (1.66), and lowest among women residing in the larg-est cities (.75). The religiosity of young men and women is not a significant determinant of the risk of entry into first marriage in general, but it has an impact on the timing of this event. A weaker religiosity implies a higher risk to marry earlier.

11.4.3   First childbearing

The patterns of first childbearing are very consistent with the patterns of first marriage. It means that in Poland these two events are experienced in a very small time frame and are dependent on similar covariates.

Among women with primary education, the highest probability of first birth is noticed in the group aged 19-21 years, among women with secondary education in the group aged 21-23. The highly educated women start their childbearing most often at the age of 24-26.

Educational level determines the differences in the timing of first birth to a large extent. The higher the level of education, the lower the risk of having a child at all and the higher the risk of postponement. The relative risk of childbearing among highly educated women in general is twice as low as that among women with primary education, while at the age of 22 or earlier it is even 8 times lower.

The number of children in the family of origin has a remarkably similar im-pact to that on first marriage. The more children there were, the higher the risk of childbearing in general and of early motherhood in particular. In the whole sample, 63 per cent of women who were only child were childless, as opposed to 49 per cent of those who had 3 or more siblings. By the age of 30, these proportions have declined to 22 and 8 per cent, respectively. They fluctuate from 5 per cent among women with primary education to 10 per cent for women with a university degree. At the age of 30, 9 per cent of women with primary education and almost 20 percent among the highly educated women are childless.

More religious women appear to experience first childbearing somewhat later than their less religious peers, however, the divergence is not very large. The influence of parental divorce is also rather weak.

11.5 | Discussion and conclusions

In this chapter, results from the analysis of the transition to adulthood in Poland among the cohorts born in 1947-66 were presented. On the basis of these results, the following conclusions/statements can be drawn/made.

At the beginning of the socio-economic transformation, the patterns of transition to adulthood did not differ from those in the past. The common patterns were: completion of education followed by first entry into the labour market. The completion of schooling and the start of a first job were very favourable factors for entry into first marriage, in particular among men. Marriage and first birth were very strongly connected, with entry into first marital union preceding first birth by about one year. The sequence of events did not depend on gender or cohort. These facts do not allow to confirm the hypotheses on the de-coupling of leaving the parental from first marriage and of first parenthood from first marriage.

Generally speaking, the overwhelming majority of Polish women and men have experienced all events by the age of 30, which confirms the hypothesis on the standardisation of behaviour on the pathway to adulthood in Polish society.

Polish FFS data confirm the hypothesis on the strong impact of educational enrolment and educational level on the rates and timing of the transition to adulthood. The risk to marry is lower for highly educated women (negative effect), but higher for men (positive effect). For both sexes, enrolment in education means postponing first marriage, for women also later childbearing. Also an earlier departure from the parental home is strongly connected with attaining a higher level of education, in particular for young women living in rural areas and in small cities. The limited urbanisation process forces many young adults from the villages to leave the parental home for the cities in seek of education and employment. The longer stay with the parents in the urban population is the outcome of unresolved urbanisation problems such as housing construction rates that are incapable of satisfying demand.

Up to the beginning of the 1990s, the timing of the various transitions to adulthood was influenced by the specifics of the individual's family of origin. In all cohorts the risk to leave the parental home was lower for men and

women who were only children as compared with their contemporaries from larger families. Parental divorce had a weaker behavioural impact on the path to adulthood, in particular in the case of men. Young women who were brought up in incomplete families were less reluctant to leave the parental home and to enter into marriage early than women raised in families with both parents.

In Western societies, changing practices in the transition process were first adopted by people from more modern segments of society (the highly educated, the less religious, those engaged in socio-economic and cultural processes). These people were mostly living in large cities. City people are often viewed as showing more modern behaviour than rural folk, either because there is less social control in cities or because cities offer more alternatives to traditional family life (Manting, 1994). To some extent, Polish FFS data on the determinants of the risk and timing of the transition to adulthood confirm this hypothesis. The place of residence at the age of 15 influenced the risk and timing of selected events on the way to adulthood up to the early 1990s. Later completion of education and later entry into the labour market, postponement of first marriage and childbirth were mainly associated with inhabitants of the largest cities. The higher risk to leave the parental home in general as well as at younger ages was typical for rural areas.

According to the hypotheses formulated on this, and taking into account former studies on the impact of religion on family formation patterns (Thorton and Camburn, 1989), one would expect strong connections between religiosity and the risk and timing of the transition to adulthood. Polish data confirm this hypothesis only for the close relation between the timing of leaving the parental home and frequency of church attendance. The most religious people left the parental home later.

Coming to a general conclusion, one may say that at least up to the year 1991, Polish patterns of the transition to adulthood could be identified as traditional. Some of the selected variables did not have any strong impact on behaviour during the pathway to adulthood. But it is noteworthy that, generally speaking, the results of the FFS data point to some inter-cohort differences, and to a strong impact of educational level and place of residence on the risk and timing of events.

More recent socio-demographic data show remarkable changes in the patterns of the Polish transition to adulthood, either in terms of educational and occupational behaviour or with respect to matrimonial and reproductive processes. Since the middle of the 1990s, decreases in the numbers of marriages and births due to a strong decline in the propensity to enter into marriage and parenthood have been most evident, especially in the younger

groups of the population. The birth intensity in the group of teenage women for instance declined from 32 births per 1000 women in 1991 to 19 in 1997 (Central Statistical Office, 1998). Simultaneously, there has been a slight but steady increase in the number of divorces (from 33.8 thousand in 1991 to 42.5 thousand in 1997) and in the proportion of extra-marital births (from 6.6 per cent in 1991 to 11.0 per cent in 1997). At the same time, age at sexual debut among younger adults has come down, whereas the share of extra-marital births among teenagers has gone up (in 1997, each third birth in this group was extra-marital). By all signs, then, it would seem that the process of demographic modernisation in Poland has started.

There are some socio-economic factors which may determine the observed changes. Here we wish to mention the increasing aspirations of children and youth resulting in higher enrolment in education and a prolongation of the time spent in education. Also relevant in this respect is the high unemployment rate among adults aged 20-24 and 25-29, which in 1997 stood at 21 and 11 per cent, respectively. Furthermore, deep socio-economic differences in living conditions of the Polish population are barriers to the transition to adulthood, in particular for family formation (Central Statistical Office, 1998). The lack of sufficient dwelling units and the very high prices of those that come available keep youngsters at bay, i.e. in the parental home, even if they are married or having a child.

There is also an evident impact of cultural changes on the attitudes and behaviours of young people. Mass culture, in particular TV and press media have become important co-educators of young adults, leading them to adopt new behaviour patterns (Wróblewska, 1995 and 1998). In Poland like in other catholic countries, religion may still serve to slow down the adoption rate of such new practices. Only time will tell to what extent the contemporary and future changes in Poland will mirror the changes in attitudes and behaviours that other developed countries - with a longer history of established market economies - have experienced earlier.

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Figure 11.1 *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Poland, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort*

A. cohort 1947-51

Figure 11.1 *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Poland, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)*
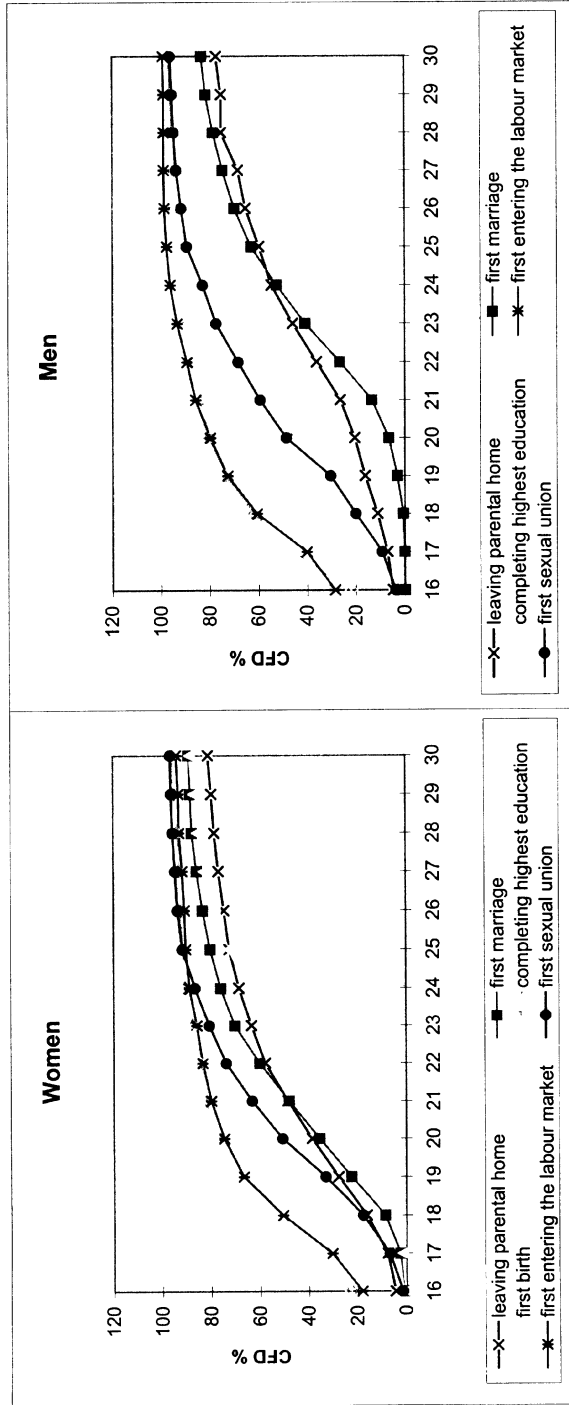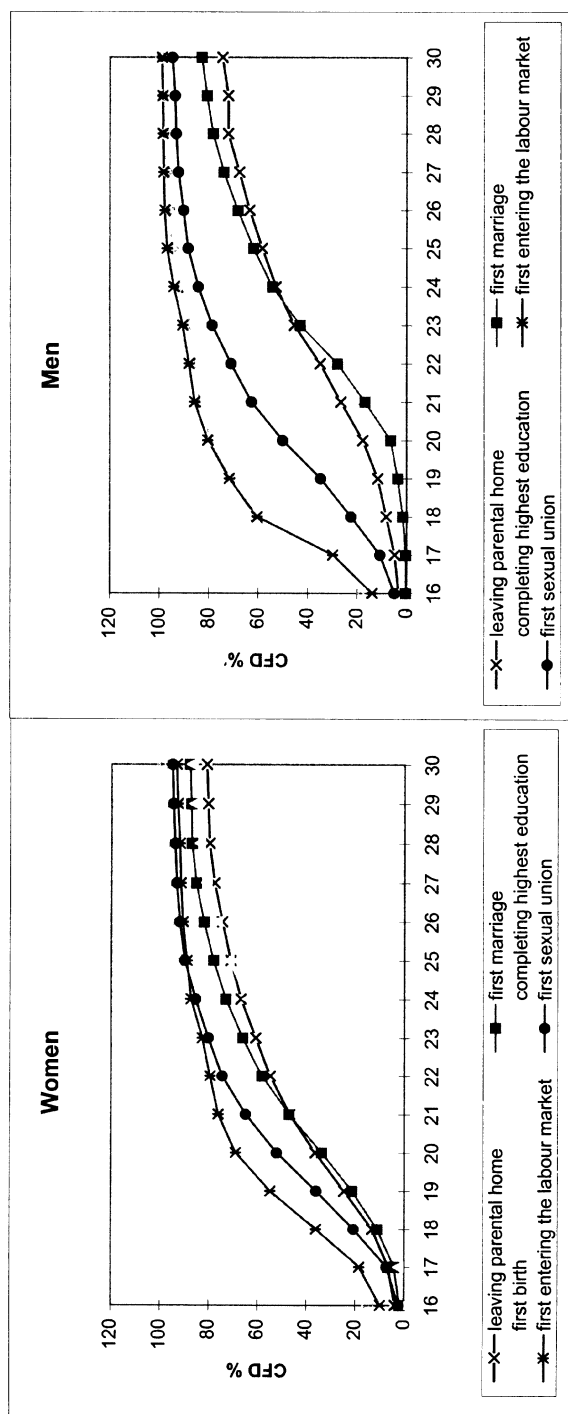
B. cohort 1952-56

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Figure 11.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in Poland, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)
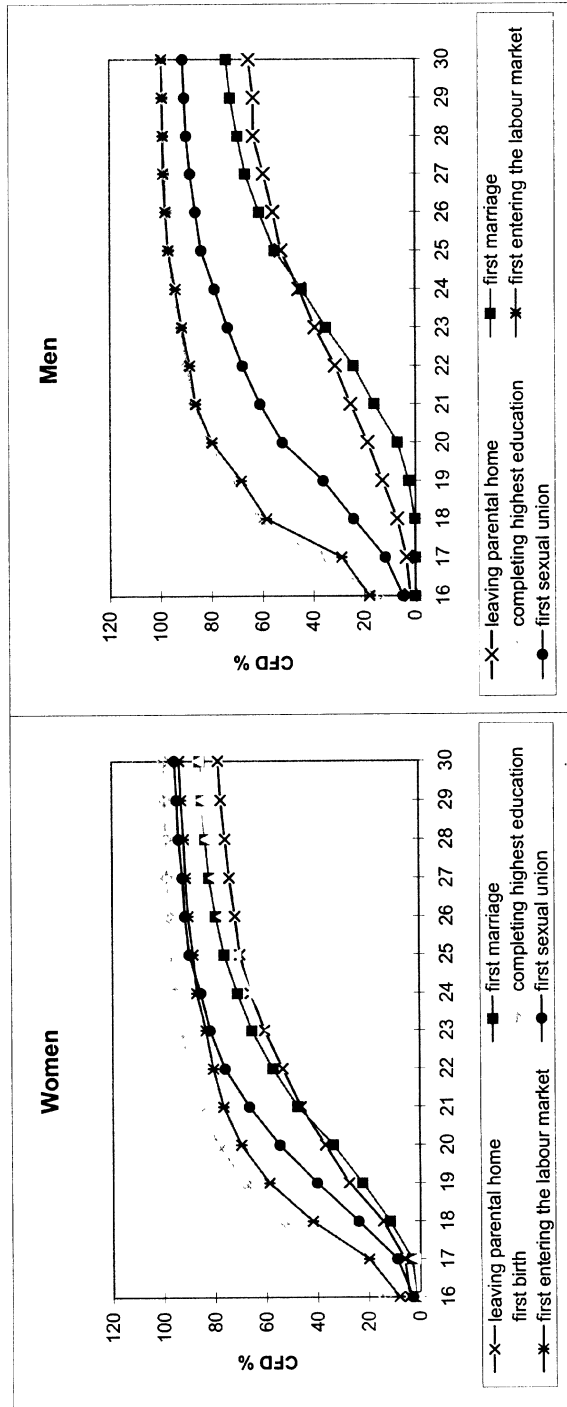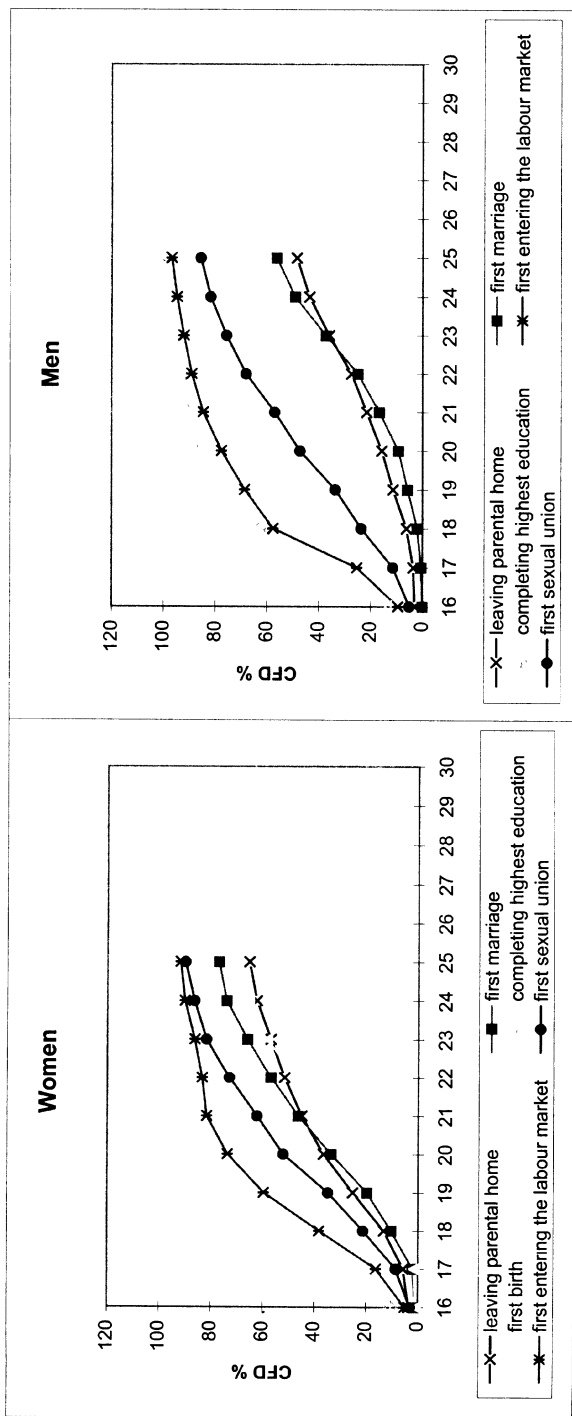
C. cohort 1957-61

Figure 11.1   Timing of the transition to adulthood in Poland, inverted survival curves by gender and cohort (cont.)

D. cohort 1962-66

12. TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD IN SPAIN

PAU BAIZAN

12.1 | Introduction

During the last thirty years the transition to adulthood has changed profoundly in Spain. Many basic areas that strongly shape the social situation of young people and influence their integration into adult life have been completely transformed, with far-reaching consequences especially for women. Some examples of these developments are: the rapid expansion of educational enrolment and attainment; the deterioration of the labour market coupled with higher female participation; the democratisation of family relationships across the generations and between the sexes (Ministerio de Asuntos Sociales, 1988); the spread of "non-traditional" values and attitudes (CIRES, 1992); and the liberalisation of sexual behaviour (Delgado and Castro Martín, 1999). In contrast with these changes, there seems to have been relatively limited transformations in the way young adults form a family or household, as measured by indicators like the proportion of consensual unions, non-marital births, one-person households or divorces. The complexity of family life transitions characterising most Western countries, as illustrated by the pluralisation of their household structures, does not (yet?) apply to Spain. Nonetheless, family life and household composition for young people in this country have certainly been transformed.

In this Chapter we firstly review some of the changes that occurred among the birth cohorts of the 1950s and 1960s in the timing and sequencing of the following milestones on the way to adulthood: the end of educational en-

rolment, getting a first job, leaving home, partnership formation and entry into parenthood. Then, using event history models, we study the impact of three main variables (education, labour force participation and socio-economic background) on selected family and household transitions. Proceeding in this way, we hope to identify some of the key processes that take place during the transition to adulthood.

12.2 | Data and methods

12.2.1 Data

The hypotheses put forward in Chapter 1 are empirically tested using data from the Sociodemographic Survey conducted in the second half of 1991 by the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 1993a). The objective of the survey was to collect information on the life histories of the respondents, including their education, social background, work, migration and family formation. The survey focused on the timing of events and provides no information on values, attitudes or religious beliefs. As a consequence, the effects of these factors on the transitions studied can only be investigated very indirectly, through their hypothesised correlation with available data. The Sociodemographic Survey contains information on 158,264 individuals resident in private households in Spain, aged 10 years or over at the date of interview. The response rate was 76 per cent. For the present analysis a subsample of 10,244 men and women born in 1950, 1955, 1960 and 1965 has been selected. A detailed description of the survey, its data editing and cleaning as well as quality evaluations are given by different publications of the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 1993a and 1993b).

In the survey only the year of occurrence of the events was asked, not the month. This characteristic of the questionnaire limits the precision of measurement of the temporal connection between events (Table 12.2). In order to obtain the age at which finishing school, first employment, leaving the parental home, entry into first partnership or parenthood took place, we subtracted the year of birth of the individual from the year of occurrence of the event.

Full educational trajectories were recorded, including information on informal studies. For present purposes, only studies in the official system of education were taken into account. The age at the end of educational enrolment reports the age at which the individual left the educational system for good, irrespective of possible previous discontinuities. Only periods of enrolment

beginning before age 25 are included. Changes in the educational level over the life course are directly estimated from data on the year in which the person obtained the corresponding diploma. The time-varying covariate "educational level" (Table 12.3) reflects therefore the progression in the level attained at each particular age. In order to check for possible behavioural differences, a specific category was distinguished for the relatively high proportion (16.1 per cent) of people in the sample who never obtained a primary school diploma.

The information concerning labour market careers was not as complete as that of the educational career. It was nevertheless possible to compute the age at which the individual started his or her first "stable" employment (i.e. lasting more than six months), as reported in Tables 12.1 and 12.2 as well as in Figure 12.1. The survey does not provide information on periods of unemployment preceding a job spell or on work interruptions lasting less than twelve months. Thus, the category "economically active" of the "activity status" variable in Table 12.3 refers to periods of employment not interrupted for more than twelve months. The category "enrolled in education" takes into account periods of enrolment of persons not economically active, as just defined. The residual category "other situations" comprises periods of "inactivity" (including homework and military service) as well as long-term unemployment.

The Sociodemographic Survey considers individuals as having left the parental home if they no longer reside in the same household with at least one of their parents on a permanent basis. It therefore excludes situations of short-term absence from the parental home, or of persons still dependent economically on their parents. In particular, if young persons are only temporarily absent in order to attend school, university or fulfil their military service, they are not considered as having left the parental home (INE, 1993b). The event of leaving the parental home may thus involve some degree of ambiguity, from a subjective as well as from an objective point of view, since multiple residence is possible. Nevertheless, the order of this event with respect to other events, in particular union formation, is unlikely to be misreported (Auriat, 1996).

The date of first union formation in the survey refers to the year in which actual co-residence between partners began, not necessarily to the date of legal marriage (if applicable). Due to data limitations it was not possible to conduct separate analyses for marriages and consensual unions. But unmarried cohabitation does not seem to be a widespread phenomenon: 1.27 per cent of the population aged 18 or over in 1991, and 4 per cent of the same in

1995 (5 per cent in the age group 25-29, 6 per cent in the age group 30-34), according to Delgado Pérez (1997). No detailed longitudinal data are available on this subject for the Spanish population.

Finally, we include in the analysis an indicator of the individual's social background as well as an indicator of the cultural and economic regional context in which he or she grew up. The "parents' socio-economic status" refers to the father's professional category when the respondent was 16 years old, and consists of the categories "worker", "intermediate professions", "higher professions" and "self-employed". The latter does not include the self-employed with employees (which are included in the category "higher professions"); it mainly comprises farmers (but not agricultural workers). The "region" of birth is composed of four groups of "autonomous communities": "Centre" (Madrid, Castilla-León, Castilla-La Mancha, La Rioja), "North" (Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, País Vasco, Navarra), "South" (Andalucía, Extremadura, Canarias, Murcia, Ceuta, Melilla), and "East" (Aragón, Cataluña, Valencia, Baleares). This grouping is based on regional patterns of household composition and nuptiality (Solsona and Treviño, 1990; Pujadas and Solsona, 1988). Given the very low levels of inter-regional migration during childhood and adolescence for the birth cohorts here considered (Baizán, 1999), this indicator can be assumed to reflect the conditions experienced by them during their youth.

12.2.2   Methods

The analysis of each of the different transitions relies, in a first step, on life table techniques. In the calculation of the probability that an event will occur, life tables take into account the exposure time of those individuals who have not experienced it by the survey date. Among the diversity of functions available from these life tables, we have plotted the inverted survival function (Figure 12.1), i.e. the percentage of members of each cohort who have experienced the event under study by exact age x. These curves reflect in a synthetic way the changes in timing and intensity of the phenomenon between different birth cohorts. The 95 per cent confidence intervals of the survival functions are for all ages and transitions smaller than $\pm$ 0.03. Some measures derived from the survival functions are the median age, the quartiles, and the proportions of people having experienced the event by age 25 or 30 (Table 12.1). Weights were applied to these descriptive, but not to the multivariate analyses.

We used logistic regression models in order to explore the impact of different variables on the probability of occurrence of each transition between age

15 and 35 (Yamaguchi, 1991). This discrete-time event history technique estimates the effects of (different categories of) a particular independent variable on the logarithm of the "odds" that the dependent variable takes one value rather than the other, when controlling for the effects of other independent variables. In order to obtain interpretable interaction effects, parameters were coded as deviations from the mean rather than from a reference category.

In Table 12.3 we present two models for each transition studied. Model 1 includes the relative effects of four co-variates (educational level, activity status, parents' socio-economic status and age group). Model 2 reports on the effects of some additional variables (birth cohort, region, and - in the case of first unions - whether or not the respondent lived with the parent(s) in the time unit immediately preceding union formation), as well as on the interactions of age with educational level and activity status. Model 2 results were obtained using a forward step-wise selection procedure. The likelihood ratio test was used to decide on the inclusion/exclusion of each additional variable. Only the main effects and interactions found to significantly (p<0.05) improve the model are presented in Table 12.3.

12.3 | Timing of the transition to adulthood

12.3.1 Timing of transitions

Figure 12.1a shows that the *age at leaving school* has increased substantially from the older to the younger birth cohorts. The age at which 75 per cent of cohort members have left the educational system increased from 18.0 to 21.1 years for men, and from 16.3 to 22.1 for women (Table 12.1). This indicates an important expansion of secondary and higher education. The introduction in 1970 of a reform in the educational system, which contributed to generalise the lower secondary level (de Puelles Benítez, 1980), mainly affected cohorts born from 1960 onwards. These cohorts were also involved in the particularly rapid expansion of higher education that took place during the 1980s. The increase in the length of educational enrolment has particularly benefited women, as is illustrated by the fact that the gender gap – still conspicuous among older birth cohorts - completely disappeared among the younger cohorts. This suggests that nowadays men and women can present themselves in the labour market with equal levels of education (for a more nuanced description of these trends, see Garrido, 1992).

The survival curves of *starting a first job* (Figure 12.1b) follow similar patterns as the curves of the end of educational enrolment, showing a postponement in this transition for younger cohorts. The median age in getting a first job is 0.9 years higher than the median age at the end of educational enrolment for men born in 1950, and 3.7 years higher for women born in 1965. Of course, not only a higher age at completing education has affected these trends, but also other factors, for example the economic crises of the years 1975-85 that hit the members of the younger birth cohorts when they first tried to access the labour market. Nevertheless, the most striking feature of the curves is the relatively high proportion of women who by age 25 had never been employed (in the ages under study). This proportion seems to decrease somewhat across the cohorts, from 28 per cent among those born in 1950 to 26 per cent among those in 1965. This small decrease reflects two parallel but opposite trends: the postponement in getting a first job and the higher proportion of women achieving this transition, leading to similar levels around age 25.

Male and female curves have a tendency to follow the same pattern across birth cohorts, although even for the 1965 birth cohort there is still a considerable difference in the proportion of men (88 per cent) and women (74 per cent) who have ever had a job. This indicates that similar educational attainment levels have not necessarily led to equivalent labour force participation rates.

The age at which 50 per cent of the respondents were found to be *living away from the parental home* is over 25.0 years for men and over 22.9 for women, for all birth cohorts studied (Table 12.1). This transition is thus generally achieved at a much higher age than the end of educational enrolment and the start of a first job. The differences in the timing of home leaving between the three older birth cohorts (1950, 1955, 1960) are very small, although a certain postponement is already visible for men born in 1960. Nevertheless, members of the 1965 birth cohort show a clear delay in this transition. One should keep in mind that people born in the 1950s had the earliest pattern of home leaving recorded in Spain during the 20th century. The age of leaving home has tended to decrease since the cohorts born in 1920, although for them the proportion who never left the parental home was considerably higher (INE, 1993b). Given the increasing incompatibility between forming a couple and living in the parental home (Baizán, 1998), the departure from the parental home as a process for the cohorts born in the 1960s is likely to continue well beyond age 30.

Table 12.1 Timing of the events of the transition to adulthood in Spain, by gender and cohort (in years)

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1950	1955	1960	1965	1950	1955	1960	1965
End of educational enrolment								
Q1*	13.1	13.5	14.0	14.4	12.5	13.3	13.7	14.2
Q2	14.3	15.0	15.7	16.8	14.0	14.5	15.1	17.0
Q3	18.0	19.4	19.7	21.1	16.3	18.3	19.4	22.1
Q3-Q1	4.9	5.9	5.7	6.7	3.8	5.0	5.7	7.9
% not at age 25	7.7	7.1	8.6	12.9	8.0	7.4	8.2	12.0
First employment								
Q1	13.8	14.1	14.5	16.6	14.8	14.6	15.2	16.7
Q2	15.2	15.9	16.4	18.5	17.9	17.3	18.3	20.7
Q3	18.8	19.4	20.9	22.4	29.2	23.4	26.0	(>25)
Q3-Q1	5.0	5.3	6.4	5.8	14.4	8.8	.10.8	-
% not at age 25	6.3	6.7	10.3	12.2	28.0	22.4	27.8	25.6
Leaving the parental home								
Q1	23.0	22.6	23.0	24.5	20.6	20.4	20.2	21.6
Q2	25.2	25.0	26.0	(>25)	23.4	22.9	23.5	(>25)
Q3	28.9	30.1	(>30)	-	28.0	27.0	28.9	-
Q3-Q1	5.9	7.5	-	-	7.4	6.6	8.7	-
% not at age 30	21.5	25.1	30.9	-	20.7	20.4	22.9	-
First union								
Q1	24.0	23.2	23.5	24.8	21.1	20.7	20.5	21.9
Q2	25.7	25.5	26.2	(>25)	23.3	22.9	23.5	(>25)
Q3	28.8	29.3	(>30)	-	26.0	25.7	27.9	-
Q3-Q1	4.8	6.1	-	-	4.9	5.0	7.4	-
% not at age 30	19.6	23.7	29.3	-	12.7	15.0	19.5	-
First child birth								
Q1	25.5	24.9	25.7	(>25)	22.8	22.4	22.3	24.3
Q2	27.6	27.9	29.3	-	25.3	25.2	26.3	(>25)
Q3	32.0	33.9	(>30)	-	28.8	29.2	(>30)	-
Q3-Q1	6.5	9.0	-	-	6.0	6.8	-	-
% not at age 30	30.0	37.6	45.8	-	20.8	22.8	31.0	-

Source: Sociodemographic Survey 1991, Instituto Nacional de Estadística

* Q1, Q2, Q3 are quartiles

Given the strong link between the departure from the parental home, first union formation and parenthood in the Spanish context (see following paragraphs), it is not surprising to find very close trends in these transitions (Figures 12.1c, d and e). Cohorts born in 1960, and in particular in 1965, show also with respect to *union formation* and *first parenthood* a tendency to postpone. By the age of 25, the proportion of men who ever entered a

union decreases from 48.0 to 26.3 per cent, respectively, for the 1955 and 1965 birth cohorts. Corresponding figures for women of the same birth cohorts are 70.4 and 47.3 per cent. It is nevertheless interesting to note that, especially among women of the 1950 birth cohort, the proportion who ever left the parental home was considerably lower than the proportion who ever entered a first union (79 compared to 87 per cent,). This indicates that a certain number of couples remained at the parental home after marriage. A delayed pattern of childbearing (Castro Martín, 1992) among the younger birth cohorts is also noticeable in our data: only 54 per cent of men and 69 per cent of women from the 1960 birth cohort had had a child by age 30.

12.3.2   Disconnection from age

In Chapter 1 it was hypothesised that the individualisation process would result in an increasing destandardisation of the life course, spreading from older to more recent cohorts. Individuals would less easily accept age norms on the timing of transitions and/or an increasing differentiation of these norms would be taking place among young adults. As a result of these processes, so it was claimed, a weakening in the connectedness of each individual transition with a particular age should be observable. In Figure 12.1 a linearisation of the survival functions is indeed visible for all transitions studied. Another measure of the age relatedness of transitions is the interquartile range (Q3-Q1 in Table 12.1). For the transition "end of educational enrolment" this measure yields 3.8 years for women of the 1950 cohort and 7.9 years for those of the 1965 cohort. Differences among men of the same birth cohorts are somewhat smaller: 4.9 against 6.7 years. This widening age range is due to the expansion of secondary and higher education. The interquartile range for "first employment" does not increase in the case of women born between 1950 and 1960 (14.4 years and 10.8 years, respectively), since in the oldest cohort studied a significant proportion of women never had a job. When the intensity of a phenomenon changes across cohorts, as in this case, the inter-quartile range is not a very adequate measure of the age connectedness.

For all events of the family career the inter-quartile range increased significantly across female birth cohorts. For example, this indicator for first unions increased from 4.9 to 7.4 years between the 1950 and 1960 birth cohorts. In the case of the male cohorts born in the 1960s, an exact measure of the inter-quartile range for these family transitions is impossible to obtain, since right censoring occurred before 75 per cent of these cohorts had experienced these transitions. Nevertheless, these ranges do have increased, at least for first union formation and leaving the parental home, for which the

range was 4.8 and 5.9, respectively, in the 1950 cohort but much higher in the cohort born 10 years later.

12.3.3 Disconnection from each other

The destandardisation process in the transition to adulthood may not only imply less age relatedness between individual transitions, but it can also be hypothesised to lead to an increasing disconnection in the timing of the transitions from each other. Certain "standard" sequences and simultaneity patterns between transitions should then be followed by a diminishing proportion of the population across birth cohorts.

Table 12.2 shows to what extent selected pairs of transitions take place during the same calendar year or precede or follow each other. It can be seen that among young men and women of each birth cohort having left the parental home and having entered a first union before the exact age of 31, the proportion of those who synchronised these two transitions is not only very high, but increases substantially from older to younger birth cohorts. For instance, 76 per cent of women born in 1950 and 80 per cent of those in 1960 experienced both transitions during the same calendar year. Therefore, contrary to the trends observed for some other Western European countries, it seems that in Spain the norm whereby the breaking-away of children from the family of origin is marked by marriage, has been reinforced across cohorts. Hence, any postponement in the marriage timing will also imply a further delay in leaving the parental home.

Only a decreasing minority of young people left the parental home before first union formation, although it is interesting to note that the proportion of men who follow this particular order is much higher that the corresponding proportion of women. Leaving the parental home before union formation has been shown to be related to long-distance migration and to the work and educational careers of young adults (Baizán, 2000). The decline of rural-urban migration and the relative uniformization of economic opportunities among the regions since the end of the 1970s (Cabré, Moreno and Pujadas, 1985) may have played a role in the trends observed of leaving the parental home for reasons other than union formation.

The small proportion of young adults who start a first union before leaving the parental home may reflect the difficulties experienced by some couples in the labour or housing markets. Nevertheless, it does not take into account the trajectory of couples who live in the parental home of one of the partners on a more permanent basis. These situations of cohabitation in the same

Table 12.2 (Dis)connection in the transition to adulthood in Spain, by gender and cohort

	Males cohort				Females cohort			
	1950	1955	1960	1965	1950	1955	1960	1965
Leaving the parental home and first union								
=	72	74	79	79	76	80	80	84
<	24	22	17	17	17	15	14	10
>	4	4	4	5	8	5	5	6
(%)	(75)	(72)	(67)	(28)	(76)	(77)	(74)	(47)
first job								
=	8	7	6	8	8	6	7	8
<	9	7	6	8	9	10	15	17
>	84	86	88	84	83	84	78	76
(%)	(79)	(74)	(70)	(32)	(59)	(65)	(65)	(41)
First child and first union								
=	12	12	15	24	10	11	11	15
<	3	2	3	10	2	2	1	4
>	86	85	82	67	89	88	87	82
(%)	(69)	(64)	(56)	(18)	(81)	(77)	(70)	(36)

Source: Sociodemographic Survey 1991, Instituto Nacional de Estadistica

= means occurrence during same calendar year
< means one event precedes other
> means one event follows other
(%) persons having experienced both events before age 31 (26 for the 1965 birth cohort)

household of couples of different generations seem to be increasingly avoided by members of the younger birth cohorts, probably because they have higher expectations concerning privacy and autonomy.

A first job is generally obtained long before leaving the parental home. Therefore, there only exists a weak temporal link between these two transitions. As shown in Table 12.2, 88 per cent of the men and 78 per cent of the women belonging to the 1960 cohort have had a first employment before leaving the parental home. Moreover, the average number of years between the start of a first job and leaving home amounts to 8.4 for men and 7.0 for women of the 1960 cohort, and to 9.9 and 8.8, respectively, for those of the 1950 cohort. Synchronisation between these two transitions is thus surprisingly rare, contrasting with the close link between leaving the parental home and first union formation. Even taking into account the short-term nature or the relatively low earnings of first employment for many young adults, and

their need for sufficient time to accumulate resources in order to establish a new household, the fact of working in the labour market does not seem to be a sufficient condition to form an independent household (or to join an existing one). Union formation, and maybe the fact of attaining a certain relatively high age, could be more decisive. Of course, as can be deduced from the small proportions of individuals who leave home before their first job, a certain degree of economic independence is usually a prerequisite (especially for men) for attaining household autonomy.

Very few first births take place before getting married or before forming a consensual union in Spain, according to the answers to the Sociodemographic Survey reported in Table 12.2. On the other hand, the proportion of births conceived premaritally and taking place within 7 months of marriage has almost doubled across the marriage cohorts of 1960-65 to 1980-83 (Castro Martín, 1992; Muñoz Pérez, 1991), whereas maritally conceived births have been increasingly delayed. This trend has certainly had an effect on the low proportions of young parents among those born in the 1960s.

12.4 | Determinants of the transition to adulthood

In this section we present the results of a multivariate analysis concerning some transitions related to family and household formation (Table 12.3). The dependent variables selected are "first union", "first parenthood", "leaving the parental home" and "leaving the parental home before union formation". The inclusion of separate models for the latter can be justified by the fact that union formation dominates the results concerning all departures from the parental home, while a diversity of other influences, such as work or educational opportunities, may be related to departures before an eventual union (Goldscheider and DaVanzo, 1989).

The models presented measure the effects of education, the occupational career, and the socio-economic background of the family of origin. Although it would be interesting to differentiate between economic and attitudinal variables in an empirical analysis, we do not have appropriate data to accomplish this. Even if such indicators were available, it would be problematic to evaluate their relative importance in a satisfactory way because they are highly correlated. Afterall, economic and attitudinal influences are not independent from each other, since economic activity is itself normatively regulated and as much a normative construct as a material reality. Finally, the variables birth cohort, region of birth and age are included in the

models in order to control for the variability in their effects (for a regional analysis of leaving home behaviour in Spain, see Holdsworth, 1998).

The models presented are gender-specific, since persisting gender differences in socialisation practices, role behaviours and opportunities in the labour market, among others, may lead to differentials in the effects of the variables included.

12.4.1. Impact of education

The results of the activity status "enrolled in education" (Table 12.3) show the strong incompatibility in the Spanish context between being a student and forming a family or household. As discussed in Chapter 1, this incompatibility probably has its origins in normative expectations concerning the roles of students and partners (Blossfeld and Huinink, 1991). Furthermore, pupils and students generally are economically dependent, which limits their capacity to form an independent household. Therefore, the educational expansion is an important element in the postponement of the transition to adulthood. As expected in Chapter 1, the effect of being enrolled in education is stronger on first parenthood than on first union formation, since the birth of a child could seriously compromise young adults' success in their educational and work careers (Rindfuss, Bumpass and Craig, 1980). For example, among men the relative risk of entering a partnership whilst remaining in education is $(0.43/(2.26*1.03)=)$ 0.18 times that of those who are not enrolled, and for first parenthood the relative risk is 0.13 (model 1). Nevertheless, contrary to expectations, the incompatibility between the role of student and parent seems to be higher for men than for women, a result that could be related to the male's normative role as main provider of economic resources in a couple.

Leaving the parental home before union formation, of course, is much less incompatible with educational enrolment, and in some cases the need to change place of residence in order to attend secondary education or university may even have triggered the departure from the parental home. As a result, the relative risk of women leaving home while still in education is as high as 0.65 compared to those who have left the educational system (model 1).

Consistent with the hypothesis stated in Chapter 1, educational attainment is positively associated with leaving the parental home before union formation. Men with a university degree have a relative risk of leaving home before union formation that is 2.29 times higher than for men without a pri-

mary school diploma, and for women this effect is even stronger (2.97). Better educated individuals have better employment opportunities and higher earnings, allowing them to establish an independent household. In addition, potential work opportunities are more geographically dispersed (Sandefur and Scott, 1981), inducing young adults with a high educational attainment to leave home in order to take advantage of them. Moreover, individuals with higher education may have higher preferences for autonomy, leading them to leave home earlier. Finally, it is interesting to note that those who left home before union formation - who thus have first lived in a one-person household or with people other than their parents - have a relative risk of forming a union that is much lower (0.76/1.31= 0.58 for men and 0.84/1.19= 0.71 for women) than those who were at the parental home until their marriage or the start of a consensual union, as shown by the results of the variable "living with parents" (model 2).

The results for leaving the parental home including departures simultaneous with union formation, are heavily influenced by the strong positive impact of educational attainment on departures before union formation. They nevertheless show a much attenuated positive effect, especially for women, for whom first union formation is negatively associated with the educational level. This last result is remarkable, since we also include in the models the effects of parental socio-economic background, which are highly correlated with the educational level of the respondents. Women with university education have a relative risk of partnership formation that is 0.73 times lower than for women with primary education (model 1); this is consistent with the expectations formulated in Chapter 1. The interactions with age, presented in model 2, show that the postponement of this transition for women with higher secondary and university education is partially caught up in the age groups 28-30 and 30-35, as expected. Women with a high educational attainment do not continuously have a low union formation risk, but they delay this transition until an age when they not only have completed education, but probably also have a consolidated position in the labour market. Education not only improves human capital and raises the opportunity costs of marriage, but may also convey values favouring autonomy and higher expectations about the quality of partner relationships (Lesthaeghe and Moors, 1995). Therefore, better educated women might wait to enter a union until more symmetric roles between the partners can be secured. In this sense the behaviour of women would have become more similar to that of men, in that starting a career in the labour market keeps them from forming a couple and having children – at least for a while (Huinink and Mayer, 1995).

Table 12.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Spain: parameter estimates (deviations from the mean probability)

	Males							
	leaving parental home		leaving parental home before union		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Educational level								
None	0.85**	0.65**	0.75***	0.66***	0.92	0.86	1.12**	1.10
Primary school	0.98	0.84***	0.79***	0.77***	1.07**	1.16	1.21**	1.33
Lower secondary	0.99	1.09	0.85***	0.96	1.04	1.43	1.05	1.35
Higher secondary	0.91**	0.95	1.15*	1.15*	0.85***	1.13	0.79***	1.05
University	1.33***	1.79***	1.72*	1.77***	1.13***	0.63	0.89***	0.48
Activity status								
Economically active*	1.58***	1.61**	0.96	0.90	2.26***	2.99	2.03***	5.60
Enrolled in education	0.66**	0.68*	0.82**	1.06	0.43***	0.26	0.30***	0.08
Other situations	0.96	0.92	1.27**	1.05	1.03	1.29	1.13	2.11
Parents' socio-economic status								
Worker	1.00	1.00	0.73**	0.75**	1.05*	1.05*	1.07**	1.04
Intermediate profession	1.04	1.01	1.15**	1.15**	0.99	0.97	1.01	1.00
Higher profession	1.18***	1.18***	1.07	1.07	1.18***	1.18***	1.11**	1.11**
Self-employed	0.82**	0.84***	1.12*	1.08	0.81***	0.83***	0.83***	0.86***
Age								
15-20	0.28***	0.45***	0.77***	0.79*	0.13***	0.12	1.12***	0.14
21-24	1.15**	1.03	0.87*	0.86	1.30***	2.13	0.82**	2.14
25-27	2.35***	2.08***	1.32***	1.25	2.61***	3.90	2.26***	4.37
28-30	1.65***	1.04	1.16	0.96	1.98***	3.13	2.63***	1.06
31-35	0.80**	1.00	0.98	1.21	1.08	0.31	1.67***	0.71

Table 12.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Spain (cont.)

	Males							
	leaving parental home		leaving parental home before union		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Birth cohort								
1950		1.08**		1.41**		0.94*		–
1955		1.11**		1.22**		1.08***		–
1960		1.03		0.87***		1.08***		–
1965		0.80**		0.67***		1.31**		–
Region								
Centre		1.06*		1.23***		0.93***		0.95
North		0.78***		0.90		0.88***		0.92**
South		1.22***		0.95		1.25***		1.25**
East		0.98		0.95		0.98		0.92**
Living with parents								
Yes						1.31**		
Education*age								
None * 15-20		0.96		–		2.25		1.96
None * 21-24		1.27***		–		1.16		1.08
None * 25-27		1.16		–		1.15		1.29
None * 28-30		1.20		–		0.81		0.77
None * 31-35		0.59***		–		0.41*		0.48
Primary * 15-20		0.81*		–		1.63		1.52
Primary * 21-24		1.17***		–		0.97		0.97
Primary * 25-27		1.22***		–		0.96		1.00
Primary * 28-30		1.08		–		0.93		0.91
Primary * 31-35		0.80*		–		0.71		0.74

Table 12.3 Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Spain (cont.)

| | Males | | | | | | | |
| | leaving parental home | | leaving parental home before union | | first union | | first parenthood | |
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	Model 1	model 2
Lower sec. * 15-20		0.68**				1.39		1.92
Lower sec. * 21-24		1.02				0.79		0.80
Lower sec. * 25-27		0.99				0.75		0.79
Lower sec. * 28-30		0.80**				0.82		0.70
Lower sec. * 30-35		1.81**				1.49		1.17
Higher sec. * 15-20		0.90				2.27		2.31
Higher sec. * 21-24		1.00				0.72		0.68
Higher sec. * 25-27		1.00				0.79		0.72
Higher sec. * 28-30		0.96				0.75		0.91
Higher sec. * 31-35		1.13				1.03		0.96
University * 15-20		2.08*				0.09		0.08
University * 21-24		0.66				1.56		1.75
University * 25-27		0.71**				1.53		1.36
University * 28-30		0.99				2.16		2.25
University * 31-35		1.03				2.24		2.50
*Activity * age*								
Econ. active * 15-20		0.84		0.89		0.66		0.46
Econ. active * 21-24		1.13		1.16		0.69		0.44
Econ. active * 25-27		1.11		1.12		0.78		0.59
Econ. active * 28-30		1.56		1.25		0.69		2.90
Econ. active * 31-35		0.84		0.70		4.11		2.94
Enrolled ed. * 15-20		0.99		0.73		1.28		2.14
Enrolled ed. * 21-24		0.84		0.83		1.80		5.05
Enrolled ed. * 25-27		1.06		0.85		2.02		3.12
Enrolled ed. * 28-30		0.65		0.89		2.10		0.15
Enrolled ed. * 31-35		1.73		2.21		0.10		0.20

Table 12.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Spain (cont.)

	Males							
	leaving parental home		leaving parental home before union		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Other sit. * 15-20		1.65**		1.55**		1.20		1.03
Other sit. * 21-24		1.05		1.04		0.81		0.46
Other sit. * 25-27		0.85		1.05		0.63		0.54
Other sit. * 28-30		0.98		0.91		0.69		2.38
Other sit. * 31-35		0.69		0.65		2.37		1.67
Number of events	3482	3482	845	845	3551	3551	2765	2765
-2 Log-likelihood	23486	23250	8482	8404	22778	22508	19572	19438

Table 12.3 *Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Spain (cont.)*

	Females							
	leaving parental home		leaving parental home before union		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Educational level								
None	0.89**	0.84**	0.64**	0.62**	1.13***	1.02	1.22**	1.19
Primary school	1.01	1.02	0.79***	0.74***	1.15***	1.16**	1.27***	1.38
Lower secondary	0.98	0.88	0.86***	0.96	1.03	0.93	1.05	1.23
Higher secondary	1.02	1.22**	1.21**	1.20**	0.89***	0.98	0.83**	1.15
University	1.11**	1.10	1.90***	1.89***	0.84***	0.92	0.75***	0.44
Activity status								
Economically active*	1.51**	1.73	1.00	1.00	1.58***	1.70	1.13***	1.42
Enrolled in education	0.49***	0.42	0.81***	0.81***	0.40***	0.33	0.34***	0.22
Other situations	1.36***	1.37	1.24***	1.24***	1.56***	1.80	2.62***	3.11
Parents' socio-economic status								
Worker	1.00	0.98	0.75***	0.77***	1.09***	1.08***	1.12***	1.11**
Intermediate profession	0.98	0.98	0.89*	0.88*	0.95	0.96	0.96	0.95
Higher profession	1.07	1.08*	1.07	1.07	1.06	1.07	1.05	1.04
Self-employed	0.95	0.97	1.41**	1.38***	0.91**	0.81***	0.89**	0.90**
Age								
15-20	0.56**	0.62	0.80	0.85*	0.39***	0.47	0.25***	0.16
21-24	1.78**	2.05	0.75**	1.18*	1.68***	1.98	1.17***	1.74
25-27	2.03**	2.61	1.21*	1.21*	2.14***	2.87	1.19***	3.38
28-30	1.21**	1.27	1.12	1.05	1.30***	1.54	1.19***	3.05
31-35	0.41**	0.24	0.84	0.79	0.55***	0.24	0.94	0.35
Birth cohort								
1950		0.87**		1.12		0.86**		–
1955		1.02		1.17*		1.00		–
1960		1.11**		1.10		1.07**		–
1965		1.01		0.69**		1.09**		–

Table 12.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Spain (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving parental home		leaving parental home before union		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	Model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
Region								
Centre		1.01		1.49**		0.87**		0.82**
North		0.87**		0.96		0.99		1.00
South		1.08**		0.85**		1.05*		1.12**
East		1.05*		0.82**		1.11**		1.08**
Living with parents								
Yes						1.19**		
*Education*age*								
None * 15-20		1.18		-		1.10		2.19
None * 21-24		1.17		-		1.26**		1.32
None * 25-27		1.02		-		1.08		0.88
None * 28-30		0.80		-		0.66**		0.57*
None * 31-35		0.89		-		1.01		0.69
Primary * 15-20		0.91		-		0.81		1.67
Primary * 21-24		1.17**		-		1.13*		1.08
Primary * 25-27		0.94		-		1.06		1.07
Primary * 28-30		0.97		-		1.07		0.77
Primary * 31-35		1.04		-		0.96		0.67
Lower sec. * 15-20		1.11		-		0.96		1.81
Lower sec. * 21-24		1.18*		-		1.12		0.87
Lower sec. * 25-27		1.25**		-		1.17		0.97
Lower sec. * 28-30		0.79		-		0.90		0.96
Lower sec. * 30-35		0.77		-		0.88		0.68
Higher sec. * 15-20		1.15		-		1.15		2.06
Higher sec. * 21-24		0.69**		-		0.76**		0.60
Higher sec. * 25-27		0.85		-		0.90		0.72
Higher sec. * 28-30		1.18		-		1.32**		1.13
Higher sec. * 31-35		1.25		-		0.96		0.99

Table 12.3   Determinants of the transition to adulthood in Spain (cont.)

	Females							
	leaving parental home		leaving parental home before union		first union		first parenthood	
independent variables	model 1	model 2	Model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2	model 1	model 2
University * 15-20		0.74		-		1.02		0.07
University * 21-24		0.91		-		0.83		1.33
University * 25-27		0.98		-		0.82		1.52
University * 28-30		1.38*		-		1.19		2.10
University * 31-35		1.11		-		1.21		3.20
*Activity * age*								
Econ. active * 15-20		0.87				1.04		0.99
Econ. active * 21-24		0.77				0.81		0.62
Econ. active * 25-27		0.80				0.74		0.61
Econ. active * 28-30		1.01				0.78		0.76
Econ. active * 31-35		1.87				2.06		3.49
Enrolled ed. * 15-20		1.06				1.04		1.15
Enrolled ed. * 21-24		1.35				1.49		1.95
Enrolled ed. * 25-27		1.69				2.03		2.65
Enrolled ed. * 28-30		1.27				1.90		1.81
Enrolled ed. * 31-35		0.33				0.17		0.09
Other sit. * 15-20		1.10				0.93		0.88
Other sit. * 21-24		0.96				0.82		0.83
Other sit. * 25-27		0.74				0.67		0.62
Other sit. * 28-30		0.79				0.67		0.73
Other sit. * 31-35		1.62				2.92		3.08
Number of events	3927	3927	691	691	4125	4125	3284	3284
-2 Log-likelihood	25648	25518	6944	6876	25942	25788	22502	22328

Source Sociodemographic Survey, 1991. Instituto Nacional de Estadística.
* p < 0.10   ** p < 0.05
Note: "economically active" category does not include persons in search of first employment or periods of unemployment lasting more than twelve months

One could expect a positive linear link between educational attainment and union formation for men. In fact, we find a U-shaped link: those with secondary education have lower risks than those with primary or university education (model 1). This may be a consequence of the way the indicator has been built, since the level of education changes with age, and the nuptiality of better educated people is not measured until they get their diploma. The higher risk for individuals with university education may thus be seen as a catch-up effect, especially important at the older age groups, as suggested by the interactions (model 2). People with a secondary school diploma who continue to higher levels of education will have a low level while still enrolled in the educational system. Nevertheless, the results seem to be consistent with the income effect, predicting a positive effect of education for men, especially if we take into account that those without a primary school diploma and thus in an especially difficult position on the labour market have lower risks than the average (0.92 in model 1).

Results for the models of first parenthood show a particularly strong negative effect of education: women with a university degree have a relative risk that is 0.59 times lower than for women with a primary school diploma; the corresponding risk for men is 0.73 (model 1). The interaction with age shows also for this transition a delayed pattern for better educated people, and a relatively advanced pattern for less educated people. These results are consistent with the hypothesis postulating that human capital investments conflict with societal expectations concerning the role of mother. In the Spanish context, women take most of the responsibility for children in terms of time and care; women are disadvantaged when they must interrupt their working lives because of the birth of a child. Given the absence or high cost of day-care facilities and the very few opportunities for part-time jobs, the incompatibility between the role of mother and labour market participation is particularly acute. Social policy has not been directed to the end of creating the conditions necessary for the simultaneous fulfilment of these two roles. For instance, until recently part-time jobs have been even opposed by policy makers; the expansion of public education for children under six years of age has been very slow, and timetables are generally incompatible with paid work. In 1991, among the population of children aged two, the proportion attending a nursery school was 4.5 per cent, and among them only 7.9 per cent were in public nurseries. Among children of four years, 90.9 per cent attended a school, from whom two-thirds were in public schools (Instituto de la Mujer, 1991). Thus, having a child "forces" women into housewife roles, a situation that is delayed or avoided especially by highly educated women.

Notwithstanding, successive censuses and cross-sectional surveys show a consistent increase in the proportion of married young women participating in the labour market (Garrido, 1992; Fernández Cordón, 1997). This trend can also be illustrated by data from the Sociodemographic survey, according to which the proportion of women aged 30 years and living as a couple who are economically active is 34.1 per cent among the 1950 birth cohort against 45.1 per cent among the 1960 birth cohort. The proportion of active women in a partnership aged 30 with higher or university education is 63.7 per cent, while it is only 34.1 per cent among women with lower education.

12.4.2. Impact of the occupational career

The effects of the category "economically active" in the co-variable "activity status " are generally strong and significant in the models analysed (Table 12.3). Nevertheless, the effects of being economically active differ widely among the different transitions, and in particular between men and women, suggesting that the availability of resources generated by employment play a different role for each of them.

Being economically active has a relatively small positive effect on leaving the parental home before union formation compared to being enrolled in education, since according to model 1 it increases this risk for men by (0.96/0.82=) 1.17 times and for women by (1.00/0.81=) 1.23 times. If the comparison is made with the category "other situations", economically active individuals show a lower risk of leaving the parental home before union formation: 0,76 times lower for men and 0.81 times for women. This category includes situations of long-term unemployment, homemaker, seasonal jobs, and military service. Since the variable "activity status" is measured at the beginning of each year, i.e. before the event has taken place, one should keep in mind that individuals who leave the parental home in conjunction with starting a job during that year are classified in the category "other situations". Therefore, leaving the parental home before union formation does not only seem to be a pathway taken by employed young adults, as one could expect given their higher availability of resources, but also to a significant extent by students or the unemployed. A more detailed analysis of this kind of departure should be undertaken in order to distinguish between the variety of situations that it encompasses.

The positive effect of being economically active on first union formation is particularly high for men, since according to model 1 it increases their risk (2.26/1.03=) 2.19 times compared to men in "other situations". According to model 2, the effect of being economically active is even higher for first par-

enthood: the risk is (5.60/2.11=) 2.65 times higher. Therefore, holding a job can be considered as a strong normative prerequirisite for union formation and parenthood among men.

Contrasting with the pressure on men to have a job before forming a union, the relative risk for employed women is virtually equivalent to that for women in "other situations" (1.58/1.56= 1.0; model 1). Nevertheless, holding a job and a strong orientation towards the work career may not only have delaying effects on union formation - through increased economic independence and the need for career consolidation (as among men) - but also positive effects. For example, it can increase a couple's capacity of setting up a new household and improving economic prospects in the long run, thus rendering employed women more attractive partners (Oppenheimer and Lew, 1995).

Paid work seems to strongly conflict with motherhood in the cohorts under study: the relative risk of first childbirth to economically active women is (1.13/2.62=) 0.43 times lower than the corresponding risk among women in "other situations" (homemaker, long-term unemployment, etc.). The birth of a first child and the participation in the labour market influence each other, although both events may be jointly determined by the cognitions, orientations and relative values that women attach to family life and their work career (Bernhard, 1990; Willekens, 1991). Work inside and outside the home should also be taken into account (Kempeneers and Lelièvre, 1991). A key element may be the lack of state policies supporting the simultaneous fulfilment of the role of the employed and the role of mother (or father), as mentioned above.

This comment on the relatively low profile of the Spanish welfare state in this area can be extended to other transitions to adulthood as well. The extremely difficult situation faced by young adults in the labour market has not been compensated or attenuated to any significant degree by income supplements or other services from the welfare state. For example, individuals are only entitled to unemployment benefits if they have worked in the past, and this entitlement is of limited duration. The amount of a scholarship permits students only in very exceptional cases to form an independent household and, until the mid-1980s, only a small fraction of them were entitled to a scholarship. The relative focus in the allocation of public resources on older age groups (Sgritta, 1995) and on household units as opposed to their individual members should here also be mentioned. Moreover, the negative consequences of some social policies concerning the labour market (for instance, the promotion of apprenticeship or short-term

contracts) or the housing market (for instance, the erosion of the rental sector and the preference given to ownership) have affected young people disproportionally. This situation may have been influenced by normative expectations regarding the minimum age at leaving the parental home, as well as by the assumption by policy makers that young people should rely on their parents (and not on the state) for primary care until they are financially able to form a household of their own.

The difficulties encountered by young people in the labour and housing markets and their effects on household formation should not be underestimated. For example, the absence of a rental housing sector "forces" young people and especially young couples to buy, thus implying a long-term shared economic commitment which is highly inconsistent with more flexible and reversible household situations such as consensual unions and flat sharing. A long-term commitment in housing better corresponds with a long-term partnership commitment, as in marriage.

The especially difficult situation faced by young people in their economic integration and the absence of a significant state support in household and family formation have probably contributed to prevent that changes in values and orientations of young adults among recent birth cohorts manifest themselves in terms of demographic behaviour.

12.4.3   Impact of the parents' socio-economic background

Given the relative weak state support to the independence of young adults, as discussed above, any help coming from their parents may be crucial in enabling them to make the transition to full adulthood. A high income and the availability of property by parents can increase the amount of resources transferred to their children, thus facilitating the establishment of an independent household, the constitution of an enterprise or the acquisition of a job. Nevertheless, in addition to these facilitating effects, a high disposal of resources at the parental home may also induce a postponement of household and family transitions. In any event, it avoids very early transitions (Avery, Goldscheider and Speare, 1992). Departure from the parental home and related family transitions may be delayed by the comfort, space and services found at the parental home. Conversely, poor household conditions at home provide fewer economic incentives to stay and may also be more demanding if, for example, parents require a part of their child's salary for their own sustenance. The capacity of higher socio-economic groups to invest in their young adults' future (especially education) can be one of the main factors responsible for the postponement of the transition to adulthood.

In the models included in this analysis, the enrolment in education has been statistically controlled for. We therefore expect that the coefficients pertaining to the variable "parents' socio-economic status" mainly reflect their capacity to facilitate this transition.

The positive effects on the transitions seems to be particularly relevant for men since sons of the higher socio-economic group show higher relative risks for all transitions studied. This is in particular the case for leaving the parental home before union formation (1.07/0.75= 1.42) and, to a lesser extent, for union formation (1.18/1.05= 1.12), while first parenthood seems to be less affected by parental socio-economic status (1.11/1.07= 1.04).

The contrast among socio-economic categories is much less marked for women, except in the case of leaving the parental home before union formation which shows a pattern very close to that of men. The results for union formation and leaving the parental home reveal only small differences between categories. In addition, the interactions of age with socio-economic grouping are not significant, except in the case of women departing from the parental home before union formation (results not shown). This indicates that the effect of parental resources is constant across age groups. A possible interpretation of these results could be that for men parental resources are mainly relevant in terms of professional investments, while marriage and household formation among women could be predominantly tied to the profession and resources of their partners, and much less to the resources of their parents.

The effect of socio-economic status on first motherhood is even slightly inversed compared to first fatherhood, i.e. daughters of workers show a higher coefficient than daughters of higher professionals (1.05/1.12= 0.93). This is consistent with the delayed pattern of first parenthood found above.

A particular case is that of the category "self-employed" whose children show much lower coefficients than those in the other categories for all transitions studied, except leaving the parental home before union formation. On the one hand, these lower coefficients may be linked to the possibility of a job at the family enterprise (such as a farm, a shop, or some other small business without non-family employees), which would induce them to stay in the parental home in order to take advantage of it. On the other hand, they may also reflect the difficulties found by young adults in the labour and marriage markets in rural areas. This last interpretation is consistent with the high relative effects of this category for the transition "leaving the parental

home before union", which could be related to departures from the parental home in connection with internal migration.

In any event, the results presented in this section do not support the hypothesis – often heard in the literature - that family and social class factors are loosing their importance relative to individual factors.

12.5 | Discussion and conclusions

One of the main hypotheses proposed in Chapter 1 was that a destandardisation process would be taking place among the birth cohorts studied. The results of the analyses undertaken show a mixed situation. On the one hand, all the transitions studied have been delayed, especially the end of the educational enrolment and the start of first employment, while for the family and household transitions the postponement appears to be less marked. The latter have always occurred considerably later than the educational and work transitions. These inter-cohort trends have been accompanied by an increase in the age range over which the transitions takes place. It is yet unclear if the proportion of people ultimately forming a couple and having a first child is decreasing in the cohorts born in the 1960s. But perhaps the most salient trend observed across the birth cohorts studied is the convergence between men and women in the timing of their transitions to adulthood.

On the other hand, the process of destandardisation does not seem to have its parallel in the sequencing of transitions. In particular, leaving the parental home increasingly takes place simultaneously with union formation, implying that fewer people experience living in one-person or multi-generation households. A variety of factors may have played a role in the acceptance, by children and parents alike, of the norm that even at later ages, leaving the parental home should still be marked by marriage. In this chapter we have discussed some aspects of the changing influences of economic constraints and opportunities, and their different impact according to gender, educational attainment and social class. Social policies dominated by a "familialistic" ideology have probably also contributed to slow down the diffusion of alternative living arrangements and to curtail the autonomy of young people, especially women. Paradoxically, these difficulties in the transition to adulthood have at the same time been mitigated - so it seems - by changes in gender and inter-generational relationships, in the sense of an increasing democratisation among composite household members (Mitterauer and Sieder, 1982; Cavalli, 1993). This may have favoured a climate of protracted permanence in the parental home by young people. These processes may

also have been reinforced by the decreasing economic constraints for staying in the parental home across the birth cohorts studied, as well as by the need for heavier investments in the educational and employment careers of both men and women in order to attain their economic expectations and more symmetrical relationships in future couple life. The availability of more comprehensive data on the social situation of young adults and on the attitudes and projects of their "significant others" (including parents and partners) would be helpful in clarifying these issues.

A very distinct result of the analysis has been that the extended participation in schooling delays the other transitions to adulthood, keeping enrolled young people temporarily out of the marriage market and household formation process. On the other hand, male employment still functions as a strong prerequisite to household and family formation. Nevertheless, leaving the parental home for reasons other than union formation was not found to be particularly related to holding a job, a result that contradicts the idea that unemployment is the main cause for the delay in household transitions. This is especially clear for women, for whom the homemaker dimension in family and household formation still seems to be widely present among the birth cohorts studied. However, the analysis of the impact of educational attainment on family and household transitions pointed to the need for some important qualifications to this last statement. Education strongly differentiates female from male behaviour: a high level of educational attainment delays union formation and childbearing, but it has a positive effect on leaving the parental home before union formation. In these results a confirmation of the new home economics approach may be seen, in so far as women are still primarily responsible for household chores and the rearing of children. Women with increasing job career resources are facing a conflict with societal expectations connected to their role of spouses and mothers, and thus postpone or avoid union formation and the birth of a child.

Socio-economic status has been found to influence the achievement of the transitions concerned, net of its indirect impact through educational attainment. Although social class factors can be hypothesised to have effects of opposite sign on the achievement of these transitions, the effect of parental resources on facilitating them seems to be only predominant in the case of men. For women this effect may be compensated by class-specific values and attitudes concerning family formation. A shown by our data, the individualisation process does not necessarily imply that social class factors are losing their importance, but this process itself might have a different impact on behaviour according to social class.

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Figure 12.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Spain, inverted*
survival curves by cohort and gender
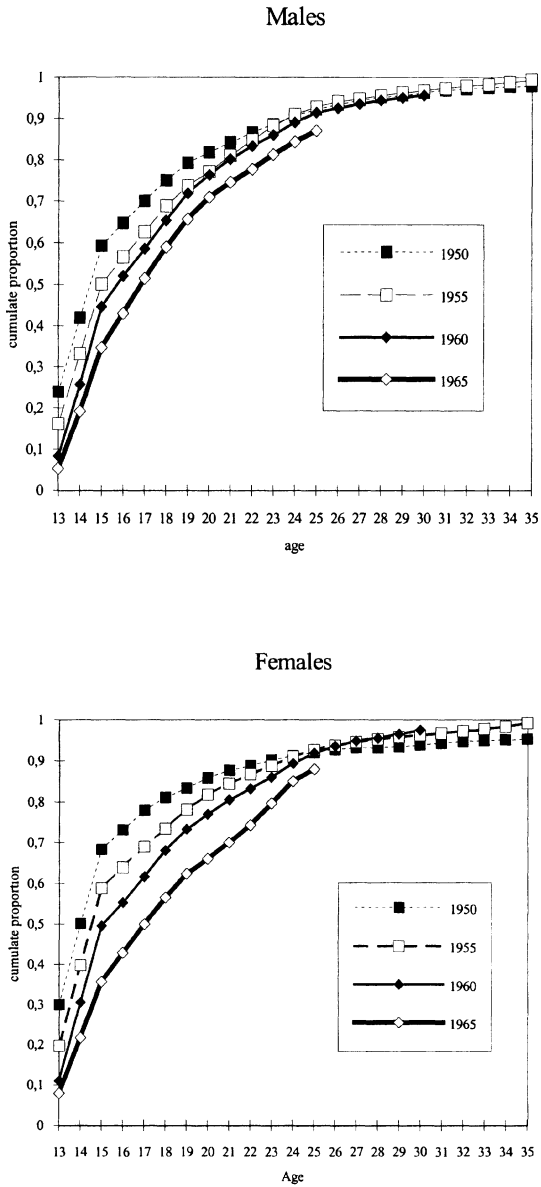
a) End of the educational enrollment

Males

Females

Figure 12.1 Timing of the transition to adulthood in Spain, inverted survival curves by cohort and gender (cont.)
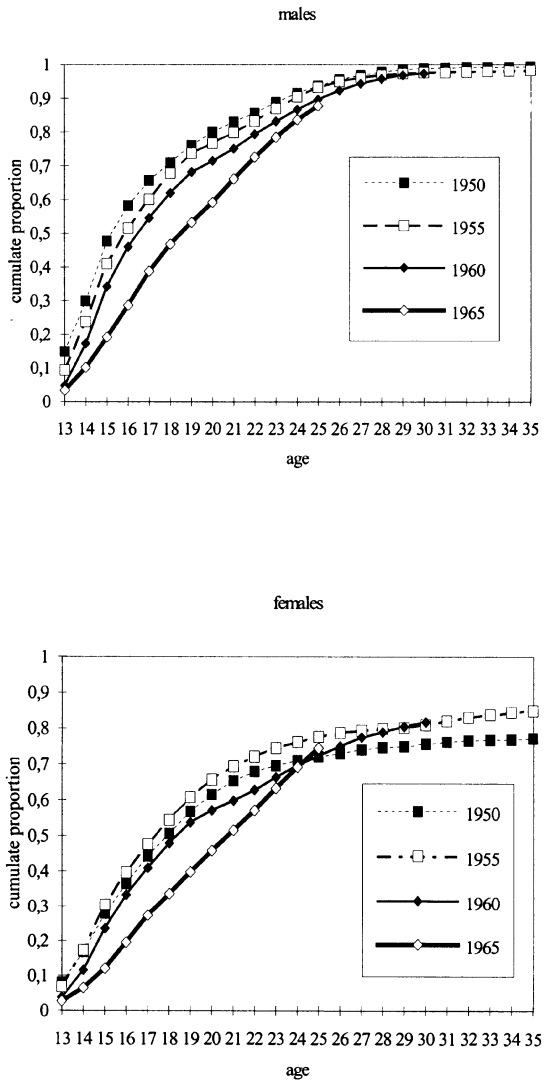
b) First employment

Figure 12.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Spain, inverted*
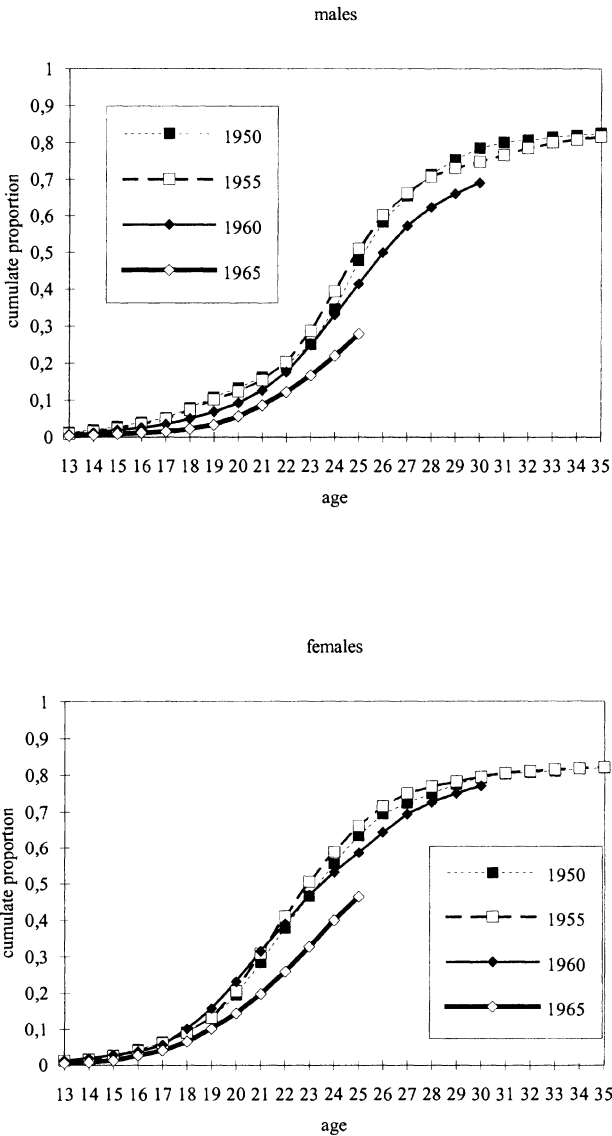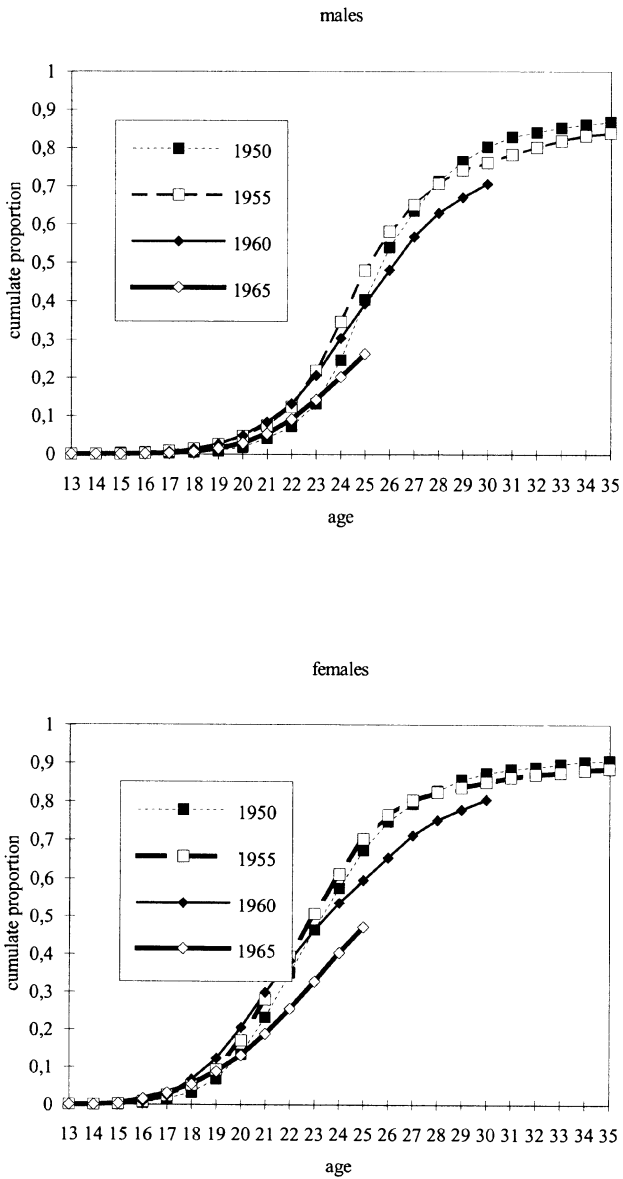*survival curves by cohort and gender (cont.)*

c) Departure from parental home

males

females

Figure 12.1 *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Spain, inverted*
survival curves by cohort and gender (cont.)

d) First union

males

females

Figure 12.1   *Timing of the transition to adulthood in Spain, inverted*
survival curves by cohort and gender (cont.)

e) First parenthood

males

females
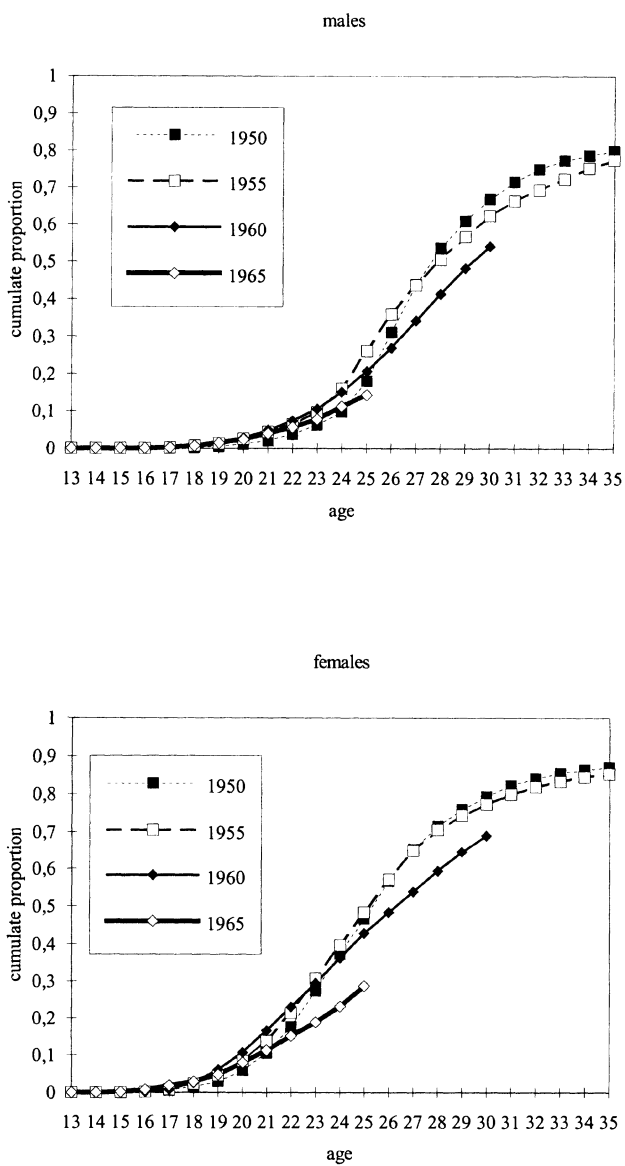
13. TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD IN EUROPE: CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

MARTINE CORIJN AND ERIK KLIJZING

13.1 | Introduction

For most European countries the timing of first marriage and first parenthood are no longer the only and most appropriate indicators of the transition from youth to adulthood. This is so because both events were not only postponed, they also became increasingly disconnected from age and from each other. Moreover, among the female post-war cohorts there was a growing inter-dependence between the occupational and family career. These were good reasons to broaden the study of the transition from youth to adulthood.

In the previous chapters, we have seen how the post-war cohorts made their transitions from youth to adulthood along various socio-demographic events in ten European countries. In Chapter 1, reference was made to the fact that some events making up the transition to adulthood are elements constituting the Second Demographic Transition (SDT). In order to summarise the discussion, it will be helpful therefore to position the countries on a SDT continuum. To this end, Liefbroer (1998) used four indicators of the changes constituting the second demographic transition: the total fertility rate (TFR), the total first marriage rate, the percentage of out-of-wedlock births (as a proxy for the spread of non-marital married cohabitation) and the total divorce rate. Using these data for nine countries involved in our study - no comparable data were available for Poland - and applying principal compo-

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nent analysis, he finds that the trends from 1960 to 1995 in these indicators are strongly interrelated, so that they can be considered to represent changes on a uni-dimensional continuum. Norway has the highest SDT score, followed by the United Kingdom, France and Austria. Germany, the Netherlands and Flanders have somewhat lower scores. Spain and Italy seem to constitute a class of their own, with much lower SDT scores. In this transition process, changes in fertility behaviour have preceded changes in union formation and dissolution. Changes in this SDT indicator have leveled off somewhat during the second half of the 1980s, but they have been increasing again in most countries during the first half of the 1990s. An increase in the divorce rate and in the proportion of non-marital births seems mostly responsible for this acceleration, whereas the deceleration was mainly triggered by the decrease in the TFR and marriage rate.

In this final chapter we describe the similarity and diversity in the transitions to adulthood in ten European countries with different positions in the demographic transition process. In Chapter 1 the data were described and the advantages and disadvantages, the homogeneity and heterogeneity, of the available data in the context of this comparative study were discussed. Hypotheses were formulated over there on the timing of the transition to adulthood and on the impact of education, employment and religion on this timing. In each country-specific chapter, these hypotheses were tested as far as the available data allowed. In this chapter, we first summarise some characteristics of the timing of the transitions to adulthood in Europe. Several trends are similar but the levels can be very divergent. Commonalities are highlighted, idiosyncrasies are commented upon. Next, we put together the results with regard to the impact of education, employment and religion on the transition to adulthood in the different countries. The hypotheses on the inter-country variation are also discussed in this final chapter. Throughout it the project and its results are discussed and suggestions for further research are made.

13.2 | Timing of the transitions to adulthood

In the country-specific chapters, the data on the timing of the transition to adulthood were organised in such a way as to permit an examination of the quartile ages at the various events, the disconnection of the events from age, their disconnection from each other and their sequencing. Three disconnections of pairs of events mark the changing nature of the transition to adulthood: the disconnection of leaving the parental home from the start of the first (married or unmarried) union, of the start of the first union from the

first marriage, and of the first marriage from first parenthood. These discon-
nections created new sequences of events resulting in a higher prevalence of
living arrangements such as non-family households, unmarried cohabitation,
and unmarried parenthood. But countries strongly differ in the degree in
which these disconnections became apparent from the cohorts born in the
1950s to those in the 1960s.

Having used an event and a disconnection perspective in this study, we re-
organise the descriptive data on the timing of the transitions to adulthood in
this final chapter around three specific transitions: from school to first job,
from the parental home to the first union, and from thereon to parenthood.
The median ages at these transitions are given in Table 13.1.

13.2.1   From school to first job

The transition from school to labour has become an issue of interest in itself.
The educational expansion process has been described extensively. Part of
the educational expansion process was related to the increasing compulsory
age for education. The cohorts born in the 1950s and 1960s benefited
strongly from this educational expansion. Notwithstanding the general na-
ture of this process, one still observes that the educational attainment of
those aged 25-34 in 1991 who were on the labour market (i.e. the birth co-
hort 1957-66) strongly differed between countries: in West Germany almost
90 per cent had an education beyond compulsory age; in Spain, Italy and the
United Kingdom this was the case for less than 50 per cent (EC, 1997).

For the cohorts born in the late 1960s the median age *at leaving the educa-*
tional system varies around 19 years. This age is much lower in Spain (17)
and much higher in West Germany (22). In Spain age 14 is still considered
the normative age to leave the educational system; about one third of the
generations of 1940-60 stops education at that age (Baizan, 1998). The
higher age in West Germany can be explained by the much higher share of
people having more than compulsory education.

Percentages of young adults in their early twenties enrolled in education
increased strongly. By 1993, most countries had about one third of their 20-
24 years old in education and/or training. With 49 and 22 per cent, respec-
tively, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom took extreme positions in
this respect (EC, 1997).

Median ages at leaving the educational system increased from the 1950s to
the 1960s cohorts in most countries. This is not the case for Poland, East

Germany, Norway and Austria. The communist regimes in Poland and East Germany did not support a strong educational expansion. In Norway and Austria it seems that the educational expansion did not really interfere with the first exit from the educational system. The educational expansion process introduced and/or reinforced in some countries the combination of education and employment and the alternation of education and employment, thus blurring the distinction between being a student and having a job.

In Norway, in addition to more time being spent in school, enrolment became less continuous and more frequently interrupted by periods of labour force participation (see Noack, this volume). In Norway a distinction must therefore be made between first, second and final exits. In the German and Austrian educational systems the combination of education and work is institutionalised through apprenticeships and other forms of on-the-job training. This often eases the integration into the labour force (see Hullen and Pfeiffer & Nowak, this volume). In Germany about half of the young adults end their educational enrolment before their first entry into the labour force, with the other half thereafter (Hullen, 1998). Both in Austria and in Germany one can indeed observe how median ages at leaving education and entering the labour force do not necessarily succeed each other. In both the chapters on Austria and the Netherlands reference is made to the fact that young adults are employed part-time during their education as a means to help financing it. For the 1960s cohorts of the Netherlands it was illustrated how the transition from education to work was related to economic fluctuations. Youth unemployment does stimulate some youngsters to continue their education.

For the countries in our study, the median age at *the first entry into the labour force* varies around 18 to 20 years for men and 19 to 20 for women (Table 13.1). This entry takes place at a younger age for Spanish men and at a later age for Italian women. For Spanish men this is related to their (very) early exit from the educational system. For Italian women this is the result of a combination of a prolonged enrolment in education and a female labour force participation that grows only slowly. For instance, in the oldest and youngest female cohorts, about one third had not entered the labour force by age 25.

Table 13.1 Median ages of the transitions to adulthood in Europe, by gender and cohort (in years)

	entry into labour market		leaving parental home		first union		first marriage		first birth	
	early 1950s	early 1960s	early 1950s	early 1960s	early 1950s	early 1960s	early 1950s	early 1960s	early 1950s	early 1960s
Males										
Austria	18.7	18.3	22.9	21.4	24.0	23.6	25.2	28.4	27.2	28.3
Britain	18.7	19.8			23.7	24.3	24.3	28.3	28.7	28.4
Flanders (Belgium)		18	22.7	23.7	23.0	24.3	23.2	25.3	26.5	26
Germany East		19		23		24		25		
Germany West		19		23		26		30		-
France	18.2	18.5	21.7	22.1	23.7	23.8	25.2	29.4	27.3	29.5
Italy	17.5	18.9	24.9	27.2	25.8	28.8	26.2	29.5	29.2	33.3
the Netherlands	17	18.5	21.3	21.8	23	23	23	27	28	
Norway*		18.1		22		23.7		25.1		28.3
Poland	19.7	19.6	24.6	26.6	24.6	25.1	24.6			
Spain**	15.6	17.4	25.1	(>26.0)	25.6	(>26.2)	25.6	(>26.2)	27.7	(>29.3)
Females										
Austria	18.3	18.2	20.0	19.1	21.0	20.7	21.9	23.6	22.8	24.0
Britain	18.4	20.2			21.3	22.3	21.5	24.5	25.3	27.7
Flanders (Belgium)		19	21.2	21.7	21.4	22.3	21.4	22.8	24.2	26.4
Germany East		19		21		21		22		22
Germany West		19		21		23		25		29
France	19.3	20.2	20.3	20.0	21.4	21.7	22.0	29.0	24.0	25.3
Italy	20.2	21.2	22.2	23.8	22.5	24.2	22.5	24.4	24.8	27.2
the Netherlands	16.5	17.5	19.6	19.5	20	21	21	23	25	28
Norway*		18.6		20.2		21.1		25.2		25.7
Poland	18.6	18.8	22.4	22.8	22.3	22.4	22.3	22.4	23.6	23.2
Spain**	17.6	19.5	23.2	(>23.5)	23.2	(>23.5)	23.2	(>23.5)	25.3	(>26.3)

Source: Country-specific chapters or SCR
* early 1960s = 1960
(>) only for 1960 cohort
** early 1950s = average 1950 and 1955
early 1960s = average 1960 and 1965

Comparing the cohorts born in the early 1950s and 1960s, we observe in our study for most countries an increase of about one year in the median age at the first entry into the labour market. This postponement is absent in Poland and Austria. With regard to the entry into the labour market, the two cohorts were in most countries confronted with temporary (high levels of) youth unemployment and (slowly or strongly) increasing levels of female labour force participation.

The transition from education to work among men is co-determined by the role of military/civil service, whereas among women it depends on the extent of female labour force participation, particularly of single and childless women. For both sexes the transition is also influenced by the gender-specific youth unemployment rates.

Most of the men in the 1950-60s cohorts had to fulfil their military or civil service. In Germany about 8 per cent fulfilled their military or civil service before their first job (Hullen, 1998). In Flanders 15 per cent of all young men went into military service right after finishing school (Corijn, 1996).

Female labour force participation in the various countries increased at different rates. By 1983 the female labour force participation varied from 30 per cent in Spain to 42 per cent in France (EC, 1997). A strong increase in the female activity rate also occurred at different times in the various countries: in the United Kingdom the strongest increase happened between 1961 and 1970; in France and Italy between 1971 and 1981; in Spain between 1981 and 1991. Flanders had already a high level in 1961. In some countries this increase concerned only married women and mothers, while in others also single women. In Spain and Italy, due to a lower labour force participation rate, women enter the labour market - in terms of median age - three to four years after they have finished education.

Unemployment hit particularly young adults around 1974, 1985 and 1994. A poorer labour market provided weaker starting conditions for young adults. In 1985 youth unemployment (under age 25) was about 25 per cent in France and Italy, and about 50 per cent in Spain (EC, 1997). In the Dutch case cohort fluctuations in the transition from school to work could be related to economic fluctuations (see Jansen and Liefbroer, this volume).

The high percentage having finished education and having been on the labour market by age 25 in all countries reflects the generally strong age-relatedness of these two events. Gender differences are small. Only in Italy and West Germany do we observe a high male proportion (over 20 per cent)

and a higher female proportion (over 15 per cent) still in higher education beyond the age of 25. In these same countries proportions not yet on the labour market by the age of 25 are also high. The same is true for Spanish women. For Italian and Spanish women this is related to the lower female labour force participation. For West German young adults this is related to the much longer enrolment in school.

The transition from education to an occupation is one that happens for most young adults while they are still living at and/or are being supported by their parents. The traditional pattern of *entering the labour market while living in the parental home* is dominant in most countries. The percentages are highest in Flanders, Italy, Spain and Poland where most young adults stay at their parents until marriage. Only for a small proportion of young adults (about 10 per cent or less) does the entry into the labour force imply that they can or have to simultaneously leave the parental home. This proportion is more elevated among Austrian and French women.

The prolongation of the educational enrolment and the related postponement of the entry into the labour force are only two reasons for the longer stay in the parental home. In most countries the duration between the end of education and leaving the parental home was, among the male cohort of the early 1950s, about 3 to 4 years. In Poland and Italy young men stayed for about 6 to 8 years, respectively, in the parental home after finishing school. In Spain this amounted to 10 years because they finished education that early. For the male cohort born in the early 1960s the average duration was reduced by 1 year, except in Poland where it further increased to 8 years. The female cohort of the early 1950s stayed also 3 to 4 years in the parental home after finishing education, except in Italy and Spain where they remained with their parents for 6 and 9 years, respectively. The female cohort of a decade later reduced this period by one year. Neither the end of education nor the entry into to labour force are sufficient reasons to leave the parental home in Poland, Italy or Spain. Young men stay for 6 (Poland), 8 (Italy) or 10 (Spain) years in the parental home after they have entered the labour force. In Spain this is related to their very early entry into the labour force. For young women of the same countries these durations are respectively 3, 4 or 5 years. In Italy and Spain part of the gender difference can be explained by differences in the labour force participation rate. Even an own income or other forms of financial independence do not stimulate young people in these countries very much to look for residential autonomy, because the housing market has generally only a very limited renting sector. For Polish, Spanish and Italian men, this long stay at the parents' home is thus more

than just a transitory stage. Further research should reveal which conse-
quences this has for their partnership and marriage prospects.

Comparing the cohorts born in the early 1950s and 1960s, we observe how
an absence of a longer enrolment in education goes hand-in-hand with a
much longer stay in the parental home among Polish men, but with a much
shorter stay among Austrian men.

Neither the exit from the educational system nor the entry into the labour
force reveal much about the financial independence of young adults. Com-
binations and alternations of education and employment are necessary for
students to finance their further education. Countries differ in their views on
who is financially responsible for students, for those in transition from edu-
cation to work and for the unemployed. In the Netherlands the state offers a
fair amount of financial support to students in terms of scholarships, subsi-
dies and/or loans (Jansen and Liefbroer, this volume). In Britain the state
shifts the financial responsibility for young adults (back) to the parents (Ber-
rington, this volume), whereas in Spain and Italy the parents are considered
to be fully responsible for financing their young adults (Baizan, Ongaro, this
volume). Cordon (1997) has analysed the relationship between unemploy-
ment and residential autonomy of young adults in different European coun-
tries and found, for the southern countries in the period 1983 to 1994, an
increase in the non-active population, with a majority living with their par-
ents; a stability in the proportion unemployed and their residential status,
and a significant increase in the number of young employed people still
living with their parents. In the central European countries the majority of
the unemployed are residentially independent, whereas the opposite is true
for the southern European countries. The role played by the family in coping
with very high unemployment in the south of Europe appears very clearly as
an important factor explaining how such high levels could be socially ac-
ceptable without provoking a major crisis. Goldscheider (1997) points in
this context to different levels of commitment in the male-female relation-
ships and to the different employment policies. On the relationship between
family living of young adults and national unemployment rates, she suggests
that the high unemployment economies of Italy and Spain are likely to en-
courage young people to remain at home until they can 'get on the ladder'
and acquire a secure job within the government or a large enterprise. On the
other hand, the lower unemployment economies of the Netherlands and the
United States may be able to provide jobs that, although not particularly
'career' jobs soliciting long-term plans and commitments, still allow young
people to move out of their parental homes into shared apartments, with
roommates and/or cohabiting partners.

Most of the FFS datasets were not appropriate to study the determinants of the entry into the labour force in detail. Hullen (1998) could do this with the German FFS data, for France this was done with the 'Enquête Jeunes' by Meron and Minni (1995). More detailed studies of the transition from school to labour should focus on the blurring distinction between education and occupation; on an adequate measure for the qualitative integration into the labour market (Oppenheimer, Kalmijn and Lin, 1997); and on the impact of the military or civil service on the male transition for particular cohorts, not only in terms of timing but also in terms of the quality of their labour force integration (Herpin and Mansuy, 1995). Further analysis should also make clear how the timing of particular social policy measures affects the education-work transition for specific cohorts of students, as suggested in the chapters on the Netherlands (see Jansen and Liefbroer, this volume) and Britain (see Berrington, this volume).

13.2.2   From parents to partners

The median age at *leaving the parental home* among the 1950s and 1960s cohorts varies for men around 21-23 years, for women around 20-22 (Table 13.1). The lowest median ages at the departure from the parental home are observed in Austria and the Netherlands, the highest in Italy, Poland and Spain. These ages, are, of course, related to the destinations chosen at the departure from the parental home. In the Netherlands leaving the parental home for the youngest cohorts no longer coincides with anything, not even a first consensual union. In Italy, Poland and Spain leaving the parental home still coincides most of the time with a marriage. The postponement of the departure from the parental home is evident in most countries from the early 1950s cohorts on. In Austria and France however this postponement started only with the early 1960s cohorts. No postponement could be observed in East Germany, partly due to the lack of detailed information. The strongest postponement took place in Italy, Spain and Poland, i.e. in countries where leaving the parental home means getting married. In Poland part of the post-ponement was due to legal regulations with regard to the minimum age at marriage (see Kowalska and Wróblewska, this volume).

The disconnection of leaving the parental home from marriage can be considered as the first main change in the transition to adulthood among these post-war cohorts. However, European countries differ strongly in this regard. Leaving the parental home at the time of marriage was dominant in the golden age of marriage. In Flanders, Poland, Italy and Spain this transition is still the dominant one for the 1950s and 1960s cohorts. This co-occurrence can take place at a rather young (Flanders, Poland) or late age

(Italy, Spain). In the other countries, strong changes in this pattern were introduced. Marriage quickly lost its importance as main destination at the departure from the parental home in Norway, France, the Netherlands, Austria, West Germany. At the same time, starting to live with a partner (whether married or not) at the departure from the parental home lost also in importance. Higher education became more often a reason to leave the parental home, after which young adults started to live alone or with others. Recent studies differentiate between reasons for leaving the parental home and/or the destinations chosen at this departure. They illustrate how the reason for departure and the timing are related, and how determinants differ according to the selected destination (Corijn and Manting, 2000; Liefbroer and de Jong Gierveld, 1995). In Germany the median age at leaving the parental home ranged over a 4 years period depending on the destination (Hullen, 1998). Returns to the parental home happen more often if the first departure was unrelated to marriage (see the chapters on Norway and Britain, this volume).

A strong postponement of the first union and/or first marriage can happen completely from inside the parental home (Spain, Italy, Poland) or from outside it (the Netherlands). Those who postpone a first marriage while outside the parental home can live in a consensual union or in a non-family living arrangement (alone or in groups).

The changing views on marriage and its postponement paved the way for *non-marital cohabitation,* but its introduction occurred at different rates in the various European countries. The disconnection of the first union from marriage can be considered as the second main change in the transition to adulthood. In Norway and Austria unmarried cohabitation was prevalent throughout the century for particular reasons (see Pfeiffer and Nowak, Noack, this volume). In both cases financial reasons among others are cited as possible explanations for the prevalence of consensual unions. The share of first marriages preceded by unmarried cohabitation also varies strongly among countries, and changes at different rates across cohorts. This variation goes from 3 per cent in Poland without change across cohorts, to more than 60 per cent in Austria, France, Norway and the Netherlands among the early 1960s cohorts. In Poland and Spain, economic restrictions (poverty, shortage of housing, limited renting sector) often force a reasonable share of young partners to remain in the parental home of either one upon marriage.

Studies on the decline of marriage and the rise of unmarried cohabitation have examined whether the postponement of marriage was compensated by an acceleration of unmarried cohabitation (Corijn, 1994; Klijzing and

Macura, 1998). The development in the timing of a first union can be con-
sidered a good measure of this compensation. In case the first union mainly
coincides with a first marriage we observe that these events are postponed
by both the 1950s and 1960s cohorts in Flanders and Italy, but not in Spain
and Poland. In case the first union no longer coincides with a first marriage
we observe a weak or zero postponement of the first union. In the Nether-
lands the compensation is no longer complete for the 1960s cohort, where
the timing of the first union is postponed by one to two years too.

The proportion of young adults leaving the parental home without entering a
union reveals the degree of popularity of *non-family living arrangements*,
i.e. living alone or in groups. European countries strongly differ in this re-
gard. In France, the Netherlands, Norway and West Germany, we observe
among the early 1960s cohort a difference of about 10 per cent between
those having left the parental home for the first time by age 30 and those not
yet in a first union at that age. These persons probably live in a non-family
arrangement, although some of them may have returned to the parental
home before reaching age 30. The prevalence and/or popularity of non-
family living depends on a variety of factors: the availability of appropriate
housing facilities, financial support for housing, practical necessities such as
the geographical distribution of institutions for higher education, parental
attitudes, strive for independence among young adults. Recently singlehood
and living alone among young adults receive more and more attention
(Liefbroer, 1997). An American study pointed to the impact of a period of
non-family living on the further family formation process (Goldscheider and
Goldscheider, 1993). Further research should reveal more details about the
kind and duration of non-family living arrangement among young adults.

The degree of age-relatedness (as measured by the inter-quartile range) of
leaving the parental home and starting a first union is lower than that of the
educational end and occupational start. There is no fixed or ideal age for
these events. In countries where marriage seems to be renounced, the age-
relatedness of the marriage timing is decreasing rapidly, as illustrated by the
third-quartile age.

Some young adults postpone the departure from the parental home for so
long that by age 30 they still live there. This is particularly true among men,
with strong inter-country variations. In the Netherlands this phenomenon is
almost non-existent. In Norway, Flanders, East Germany and France about
10 per cent of the young adults have not left their parents by that age. This
percentage rises to about 20 per cent in Austria and West Germany. In
Spain, Italy and Poland it increases to about 30 per cent for the early 1960s

cohorts. This high share is related to the strong link between leaving the parental home and first marriage. But the median ages of men at first marriage for the early 1960s cohort vary from 25.1 (Poland) through 26.2 (Spain) to 29.5 (Italy) years, with the postponement of first marriage being strongest in the latter country. In the chapters on Southern European countries, reference was often made to the importance of the family model (Ongaro, this volume; Baizan, this volume)

With regard to the living arrangement in-between the departure from the parental home and a first partnership, there are gender differences too. Young men stay longer at the parental home and start a first union later. Particularly in Italy, Germany and France, we see that by age 30 more men than women are out of the parental home, but not yet in a union: they live more in non-family arrangements or may have returned to the parental home.

13.2.3   From partners to parents

First parenthood can be considered as the final event in the transition to adulthood. However, in terms of its timing it is no longer in all countries always the last to occur. In contrast with the developments concerning leaving the parental home, starting a first union and a first marriage, we observe in almost all countries under study that the 1950s and 1960s cohorts are in the process of postponing the birth of their first child (Table 13.1). This postponement preceded that of union formation (Liefbroer, 1998). Exceptions are Austria where the postponement of parenthood started only with the early 1960s cohort and Poland, where almost no variation could be observed. On the other hand, it is strongest in West Germany, the Netherlands and Britain where recently more than 50 per cent of young men and 40 per cent of young women are still childless by age 30. In all countries the postponement goes hand-in-hand with a decreasing age-relatedness of the parenthood timing.

The postponement trend of marriage and parenthood coincides in some countries with a changing order of events, as the first marriage no longer as a rule precedes the first parenthood. This disconnection can be considered as the third main important change in the transition to adulthood. Data on *the partnership status of women at first birth* reveal how strong the disconnection between marriage and parenthood is (see also Klijzing and Macura, 1998). Also in this regard the country-specific variation is very strong (Table 13.2). In Flanders, Poland, Italy and Spain and the Netherlands the rule still is that mothers are married at the birth of their first child. However,

among the youngest cohort in the Netherlands, this marriage was in more than half of the cases preceded by a period of unmarried cohabitation. Thus, in the Netherlands marriage seems to be postponed because parenthood is postponed, whereas the opposite would be true for the other countries. The high proportion of married mothers in Poland is complemented by about 10 per cent of lone mothers. In West Germany, Austria, Norway and France the percentage of women married at the birth of their first child dropped across the 1950s-60s cohorts. In Norway, Austria and France this drop was compensated by an increase in the percentage of first-time mothers living in consensual unions. In these countries parenthood is being postponed, but marriage even more so. For Germany and Austria one can observe rather high percentages of first-time mothers not living in any partnership. Further research should reveal whether the profile of such mothers is the same in both countries. In all the other countries more than 80 per cent of the children of parity one are born within a union.

Table 13.2 Partnership status at first birth in Europe by gender and cohort (in %)

	Married		Consensual union		No partnership	
	early 1950s	early 1960s	early 1950s	early 1960s	early 1950s	early 1960s
			Males			
Austria	67	52	13	30	20	19
Flanders	95	92	3	6	2	2
Germany East	66	49	11	23	23	30
Germany West	79	70	4	7	17	23
France	84	74	11	24	5	2
Italy	93	96	2	2	5	2
the Netherlands	93	90	5	8	2	2
Norway		59		32		9
Spain	91	90	1	3	8	7
			Females			
Austria	69	60	10	18	22	23
Flanders	96	91	3	5	1	4
Germany East	67	51	6	15	27	34
Germany West	73	63	4	9	23	28
France	87	73	8	19	5	8
Italy	93	91	2	4	5	5
the Netherlands	93	89	3	8	4	3
Norway	78	50	9	35	13	14
Poland	88	87	1	2	10	12
Spain	97	92	1	3	2	5

Source: Standard Country Reports; No data available for Britain and for Polish men.

But Noack (this volume) has described for Norway how notions with regard to non-marital births have changed across post-war cohorts. Depending on the historical or cultural context, children born out-of-wedlock may be a stigmatised or normative category.

Finally, the transition to parenthood is very gender-specific. First-time fathers are older than first-time mothers. Mothers not in a partnership at the birth of their child mostly live with their child, fathers do not. For France, Festy (1994) has analysed where unmarried fathers lived when their first child was born and when they subsequently recognised their child and/or married the mother.

13.2.4 Spacing of events in the transition to adulthood

The hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1 on the timing of the transition to adulthood concerned the spacing of the events across age and the relation among the events.

We expected a *weakening age-relatedness in the transition to adulthood across the post-war cohorts*. This hypothesis is confirmed for all countries except Poland, East Germany and Austria, where the age-relatedness of all the events remained about the same, mainly because no strong postponement of the events could be observed.

Given the institutionalisation of the education/work career we expected *more age-relatedness in the education/work career than in the family career*. Although in most countries both the first exit from the educational system and the first entry into the labour force are being postponed, they still seem to be institutionalised events that remain strongly age-related. Increasing ages for compulsory education, the combination of education and work and its related integration in the labour force, the necessity of a job to finance (further) education and the rules with regard to military/civil service are all elements contributing to this institutionalisation. Exceptions can be seen in Italy and Spain with regard to the entry into the labour force among young women. In those countries the inter-quartile range is large because the 1950s-60s cohorts of young unmarried women were slowly increasing their labour force participation. Union and family formation events have, as is usual in the process of postponement, lost their age-specificity. First-quartile ages increased, but third-quartile ages even more so. Where no strong postponement is observed, such as for the marriage and parenthood timing in Poland up to 1991, no change in their age-relatedness is observed either.

We expected *the destandardisation process to have its limits and to culmi-
nate at age 25 in a rather high proportion of adults with at least some first
work experience, and at age 30 in a rather high proportion of ever-married,
and a low proportion of childless adults.* This hypothesis is confirmed with
regard to the entry on the labour market. First-quartile ages can vary from
about 14 to 19 years. However, by age 25, most young people - men and
women alike - have some work experience. The exceptions are women in
Italy and Spain, and men and women in West Germany. About one third of
the women in the former two countries have not been on the labour market
by the age of 25. The longer educational enrolment in the latter country,
often combined with practice or on-the-job training, carries with it that not
all young adults are on the labour market already by age 25.

The destandardisation of the transition to adulthood does not seem to point
to an upper age limit as far as the marriage and parenthood timing is concern-
ed. With regard to the prevalence and/or popularity of marriage among the
female cohorts of the early 1960s, the countries can be divided in two
groups. In the Catholic countries (Austria, Flanders, Spain, Italy, Poland)
the percentage of women of the early 1960s cohort who are unmarried at
age 30 varies from 13 to 24 per cent. Most Catholic countries except France
are still in favour of early marriage. The low percentage in East Germany
and Poland can be related to state regulations which link social and financial
benefits to early marriage. The other countries (West Germany, Britain, the
Netherlands, Norway and France) have 30 per cent or more unmarried
women at the age of 30. These early 1960s cohorts not only rejected early
marriage but an important share of them seem to refrain from marriage alto-
gether. Unmarried cohabitation at younger ages is rather popular in these
countries.

Another grouping of the countries emerges when one examines the preva-
lence and timing of first parenthood. The postponement up to age 30 of first
motherhood among the early 1960s cohorts is strongest in the Netherlands,
Britain, West Germany and Norway. The two Catholic Southern European
countries join this group, although their postponement is somewhat less.
The delay in first parenthood is weakest in Poland, East Germany, Flanders,
France and Austria. But early parenthood in a predominantly Catholic
country is not always by definition a married parenthood, as was demon-
strated for Austria. This country and East Germany have in common that
roughly one out of every two first births to younger cohort members occur
out-of-wedlock.

In Norway, West Germany, Britain and the Netherlands both marriage and motherhood are not only postponed but they seem to be increasingly rejected. In France, marriage is more strongly postponed (and/or rejected) than parenthood, whereas the opposite is true in Italy and Spain. Conversely, in Flanders, Poland, East Germany and Austria marriage and parenthood are both much less postponed, let alone rejected. Marriage in Austria is often preceded by unmarried cohabitation, while parenthood in Austria as well as East Germany is often non-marital.

We expected *the degree and kind of destandardisation in the transition to adulthood to be country-specific, with Catholic countries showing a lower degree of destandardisation.*

A strong standardisation of the transition to adulthood has different aspects: a close age-relatedness and a strict connection or order of events. A strong connection of events, i.e. between marriage and the departure from the parental home, first union and parenthood was, and still is, observed in Catholic countries such as Flanders, Italy, Spain and Poland. This continuing standardisation can manifest itself at different age ranges and postponement rates. In Poland, for example, family behaviour was just slightly postponed and it is only in this country that this behaviour is still strongly age-related. Poland shows two exceptions with respect to the traditional order of events. Firstly, a reasonable share of lone parenthood complements married parenthood and, secondly, a fairly large proportion of the population marries before leaving the parental home. A much weaker standardisation can be observed in Catholic countries such as France and Austria, where unmarried cohabitation and parenthood is quite prevalent. In Austria there is even a considerable proportion of parents not living in any partnership. Traditions, recent societal trends, family and social policy measures and regional differences have been cited as possible explanations for this phenomenon (Prinz et al., 1998). A strong standardisation in terms of timing can also be observed in countries with a formerly communist state regime, such as Poland and East Germany.

In terms of the timing of marriage and parenthood as measured by the percentage of unmarried and childless people at age 30, a Catholic tradition does not seem to make much difference. A strong appreciation of marriage and parenthood - as by the Catholic Church - does not necessarily imply an early timing of these events.

Similarities can be observed with regard to the postponement of the events and the growing disconnection of particular pairs of events, although the

birth cohorts of the 1950s and 1960s in the various countries experienced these trends at different intensities.

Diversity shows up with regard to the transition from education to work. The educational expansion did not affect these cohorts in the same way for all countries. West Germany and Spain are extreme examples in this respect. In some countries (Germany, Austria) this transition is still very much in-stitutionalised. In more traditional countries this transition is very much cushioned by the parents. In other countries a combination or alternation of education and work makes the transition more feasible. In the Netherlands the social welfare regime plays a central role in supporting students, and for Dutch men educational enrolment has no impact whatsoever on their de-parture from the parental home.

Marriage is valued in different ways throughout Europe. A strong post-ponement can be observed in both Catholic and non-Catholic countries, al-though strong variations in the median age at marriage remain. In the tradi-tional Catholic countries (Italy, Spain, Poland and Flanders) the connection between first marriage and leaving the parental home and forming a first union is still dominant. In Norway and the Netherlands more and more mar-riages are preceded by a period of unmarried cohabitation. In France, on the other hand, less and less consensual unions are followed by marriage.

The timing and context of first parenthood became quite diverse for the co-horts of the 1950s and 1960s. Unmarried parenthood can be observed in both non-Catholic and Catholic countries but as Klijzing and Macura (1998) have observed, in countries with a high prevalence of unmarried cohabita-tion there is generally also a high prevalence of births to couples living in consensual unions. Only the Netherlands and West Germany seem to form an exception to this rule. The incidence of births to persons not living in any partnership - another aspect of non-marital fertility - is unrelated to the inci-dence of births to couples living in consensual unions.

13.3 | Determinants of the transitions to adulthood

The methodological approach in the analytic part of the project was made as comparable as possible, although lack of data and personal preferences put limits to this. For instance, the data on the educational / occupational career could not be fully reconstructed for each country, and information on ideo-logical background was not always available.

Some of the hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1 concerned event-specific effects. The degree of connectedness of the events, as a matter of fact, determines this specificity: the more the events are coinciding, the less one would expect effects to be event-specific. Results of the determinants are summarised in Table 13.3.

13.3.1 Impact of education (enrolment and attainment)

We expected *the enrolment in the educational system to be particularly incompatible with the start of the union and family formation process.* Besides, this negative effect of the educational enrolment was to be stronger among women than among men, and to become weaker at older ages. Finally, the incompatibility of educational enrolment with leaving the parental home was anticipated to be less obvious in countries with a supporting social welfare policy.

An incompatibility between being enrolled in school and starting a union and/or family seems indeed to be the rule: the effect of enrolment is strongly negative in all countries (no appropriate data were available for Austria, France, Poland and Norway). The (longer) enrolment seems to discourage young adults from starting a first union: studying and living with a partner - even without a marriage and parenthood commitment - remains incompatible in terms of time, energy and money. The Dutch results revealed more detail: participation in full-time education leads to longer postponement of family life transitions than participation in part-time education. Furthermore, participation in part-time education delays family formation only among women.

In general, one can conclude that the impact of the educational enrolment is stronger among women. Educational and family obligations are more difficult to combine for women who usually take the larger share of household and childcare tasks.

The hypothesis that the effect of the educational enrolment becomes weaker at older ages was worth testing and indeed, wherever this was done (Flanders, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Britain), interactions between the enrolment and the age factor were found. The general pattern was of a decreasing negative effect across age.

Table 13.3 Determinants of the transitions to adulthood in Europe by gender

	Enrolment leaving home	Educational level leaving home	Educational level first parenthood	Unemployment first parenthood	Religion first marriage	Religion first parenthood
Males						
Austria	na	positive	negative	na	neg: no religion	neg: no religion
Britain	pos+age	pos+age	neg+age	na	pos: rpC+age	neg: rp+age
Flanders (Belgium)	neg+age	ns+age	neg+age	negative	pos: with religion+age	pos: rpC
France	na	positive	neg+age	na	na	na
Germany West	negative	ns	ns	negative	pos: C	ns
Germany East	negative	positive	positive	negative	ns	ns
Italy	ns	pos+age	neg+age	ns	ns	neg: no religion
the Netherlands	ns	pos+age	neg+age	na	neg: C / pos: p	pos: rp
Norway	na	positive	na	na	pos: rp	na
Poland	na	pos+age	na	ns	neg: rpC+age	na
Spain	neg+age	pos+age	neg+age	neg+age	na	na
Females						
Austria	na	ns	negative	na	neg: no religion / no pC	neg: no religion
Britain	neg+age	pos+age	neg+age	na	pos: np+age	pos: rp
Flanders (Belgium)	negative	ns+age	neg+age	pos+age	pos: rpC+age	pos: rpC+age
France	na	ns	neg+age	na	na	na
Germany West	negative	negative	negative	ns	pos: C	ns
Germany East	negative	positive	ns	ns	ns	ns
Italy	neg+age	pos+age	neg+age	pos+age	pos: p / pos: C / pos: p	neg: no religion
the Netherlands	neg+age	positive	neg+age	na	neg: rpC+age	neg: rp+age
Norway	na	ns	negative	na	pos: p	na
Poland	na	pos+age	neg+age	ns	neg: rpC+age	neg: rpC+age
Spain	neg+age	pos+age	neg+age	pos+age	na	na

Source: Country-specific chapters
age = age specific effect, rp = regularly, p = practising, C = Catholic

Only among the Dutch males of the 1960s cohort was there no effect at all of full-time enrolment in school on the timing and rate of leaving the parental home. Among Italian men there is no effect up to age 30. Family support in the Italian case and social welfare support in the Dutch case are that strong that enrolment does not hinder leaving the parental home. The German data reveal that the educational enrolment is strongly incompatible with leaving the parental home. The data of Spain, Flanders, Britain and those of Italian and Dutch women reveal incompatibility but this varies across age. The general pattern is that this incompatibility is strongest at the youngest ages.

The results on the negative impact of the educational enrolment on the marriage and parenthood timing of women are in general in line with those found by Blossfeld (1995), although for a different set of countries and cohorts. He found no effect of the educational enrolment on the motherhood timing for the 1919-68 cohort in Italy because this effect was mediated via the entry in marriage. For the cohorts born in the 1950s and 1960s this effect is no longer completely mediated by the entry into a first marriage (Ongaro, this volume).

In terms of *educational attainment* we expected a negative effect on the rate of union formation, marriage and parenthood, whereas a positive effect on that of leaving the parental home. Besides, we anticipated a negative - price - effect of the educational attainment among women, but a positive - income - effect among men. Moreover, we predicted that the impact of the educational attainment would depend on transition related opportunity costs, and as such to become less strong with age. Finally, the effect was to be stronger in countries with a more traditional family system and a less emancipatory labour force policy.

In general, the educational level does have a negative effect on the union formation, marriage and parenthood timing. The only exception is observed among East German men. The more these events are disconnected from each other, the stronger the negative effect is for the parenthood timing.

The impact of the educational attainment seems to be event-specific. The postulated positive effect of the educational attainment on the timing of leaving the parental home was confirmed for the Netherlands, Britain, Austria, Spain, Poland, East Germany (both sexes), and for Norway and France (men only). The higher the educational level of young adults in these countries, the earlier they leave the parental home. This effect remained even after an additional control for educational enrolment was introduced, or

when the educational level was made time-varying. This positive - income - effect seems to be more often the rule among young males. In the Netherlands, Britain, Spain and Poland, evidence was available of a negative interaction with age among men: a high level of education accelerates the parental home leaving particularly at younger ages. In contrast, the effect of the educational level on the timing of leaving the parental home was negative at young ages in Flanders, Italy and among French women. The higher the educational level of young adults in these countries, the less inclined they are to leave the parental home before age 25. The negative - price - effect was more often found among women.

For those countries where the interaction with age was checked, the negative effect either disappeared or inverted around the median age. No significant effect of the educational level on the timing of leaving the parental home was found among West German men. These different effects - found in countries with very different median ages at leaving the parental home, destinations at leaving the parental home and social policies towards students - are hard to explain.

With regard to the timing of the first union, marriage and parenthood the negative - price - effect of the educational level seems to be a general one both for men and women. West German men and East German men and women are the only exceptions. Event-specificity in the impact of the educational level on the transition to adulthood shows up particularly when the events are disconnected from each other. This is the case for the Netherlands, Austria, France and Britain where the negative impact is strongest on the timing of first parenthood. This negative effect is stronger among women than among men. Only for East German men is there a positive effect: the higher their educational level - and thus probably their income - the more and the earlier they enter the union, marriage or parenthood market.

In some countries the age-specificity of this effect was checked. In these cases, the general pattern was that the negative effect was strongest at the youngest ages. At later ages, it either disappeared or inverted. As such, one can conclude that a high educational level engenders only a temporary postponement of the union and family formation process. Data from available FFS Standard Country Reports reveal that the percentage of higher educated women born in the early 1950s who are still childless at age 35 is about 10 per cent in Flanders (8), East Germany (11) and Austria (12). It is about 20 per cent in Norway (15), France (20) and Poland (25) and approaches or exceeds 30 per cent in Italy (29), West Germany (30), Spain (38) and the Netherlands (42). In the latter four countries the median age at first birth

increased most strongly from the 1950s to the 1960s cohorts. Even if the effect of the educational level on the parenthood timing is age-specific or more particularly temporary - childlessness by age 35 among the higher educated can be high. Using FFS data, Beets (1998) found that across cohorts the age at first motherhood does not increase among the lower educated, it does so only among the other educational groups. These percentages of higher educated women still childless at age 35 are high both in countries with a more traditional family system (Italy, Spain, West Germany) and in countries with a less emancipatory labour market (Italy, Spain, the Netherlands).

A comparison with the results of Blossfeld (1995) - who worked with a different set of countries and a different set of cohorts - reveals that the negative effect of the educational level on the marriage and parenthood timing can show up (Germany) or become stronger (the Netherlands, France) in younger female cohorts. A check of the interaction with age in our study could clarify whether this effect is age-specific.

13.3.2 Impact of (non)employment

We expected a negative effect of non-employment, particularly on the marriage and parenthood rate. More specifically, this effect was to be stronger among men, at younger ages and in countries with a weak social welfare policy.

In almost all chapters reference was made to the fact that the 1950s and 1960s cohorts were hard hit by unemployment, particularly youth unemployment. This youth unemployment had partially an effect on the timing of the first entry into the labour force, but above all on a stable integration into the labour force. French data had shown a delay of about two years between the first entry into the labour force and a first stable job for members of the 1960s cohort (Galland, 1995). Around 1985 youth unemployment (under age 25) was highest in Spain (almost 50 per cent) and Italy (just over 30 per cent), while lowest in West Germany (EC, 1997). Is unemployment the main reason for the postponement of the union and family formation process? (For lack of data this question can not be answered for the Netherlands, Britain, Austria, France and Norway.)

The effect of unemployment seems to be gender-specific. In the case of young unmarried and/or childless women who are not employed, it should be realised of course that they can be either unemployed after having been previously employed, or they can be housewives who have never worked

outside the home. This depends on how general the labour force participation of young unmarried and/or childless women is.

Male unemployment leads to a postponement of marriage in Flanders, West and East Germany, Poland, Italy and Spain. It has a negative effect on direct marriage (i.e., without prior cohabitation) in Norway. Male unemployment also leads to a postponement of the first parenthood in Flanders, West and East Germany and Spain. In Italy there is no such effect, probably because it is mediated by the entry into a first marriage. Thus, in the context of divergent male (youth) unemployment rates, men can be seen to refrain from assuming marriage and parenthood responsibilities.

Female unemployment affects the marriage and parenthood transitions in two distinct ways. In East Germany, Spain and Norway female unemployment leads to a postponement of marriage. In contrast, in Flanders and Italy female unemployment speeds up the marriage timing, although this effect changes across age. Female unemployment has no impact on the marriage timing in Poland (Fratczak and Liefbroer, 1996) and in East Germany (Hullen, this volume). In West and East Germany and in Poland female unemployment has no impact on the motherhood timing either. On the other hand, in Flanders, Italy and Spain unemployment has a strong positive impact on the motherhood timing: it doubles the rate.

With the help of the Flemish data it was possible to shed some more light on the differential impact of full-time versus part-time work, particularly on the first motherhood. For instance, childless women with a part-time job have 32 per cent more chance of a first birth than women with a full-time job.

In the context of divergent (youth) unemployment and female labour force participation rates, non-employment can be seen to either discourage or stimulate women to have children. Both in a state regulated labour market (East Germany, Poland) and in a weak female labour market (West Germany) it can also occur that female non-employment has no impact at all. In a traditional family system (Flanders, Italy and Spain) female unemployment can be a reason for women to start a family. This happens both in the context of a strong (Flanders) and a weak (Italy, Spain) female labour force. In Spain, Italy and Flanders early motherhood thus seems to be a common reaction to unemployment.

13.3.3   Impact of religion

We expected *a positive effect of religion on the (ultimate) marriage and (married) parenthood rate*. This effect was to be stronger among women than among men and to decrease with age. We also anticipated that it would depend on the position of the country in the secularisation process: the more secularised the country, the less the impact of any religious involvement.

In Catholic countries the religious commitment affects the marriage timing and rate in different ways. In Flanders, Poland and Italy, most of the marriages are not preceded by unmarried cohabitation. In Flanders the regularly practising Catholics are the most distinctive group as they marry earlier than the others. In Poland, however, regularly practising Catholics are the most distinctive group because they marry less at younger ages (say under age 22) than the others. The impact of church attendance is in both countries strongest at the youngest ages. In Italy, the effect of church attendance is non-linear; both the very religious and the non-religious start their first union (mainly marriage) later. But their reasons for doing this may be quite different: a careful marriage decision which took time to materialise versus a marriage preceded by various non-family living arrangements. In Austria people without religion behave distinctively: they leave the parental home earlier but marry later, although with respect to first union formation - a combination of marriages and unmarried unions - no real effect of religion shows up.

In a mixed Catholic/Protestant country such as the Netherlands, the effect of the frequency of church attendance turned out to be stronger than the effect of religious denomination per se. Even though unmarried cohabitation before a first marriage has become an almost general phenomenon, a positive impact of the frequency of church visit on the marriage rate remains: more religiously committed people marry earlier. In Britain there is also a positive effect of the frequency of church visit on marriage timing. In Germany, being Catholic or not strongly determines the kind of destination at the departure from the parental home, although it has no effect on the marriage timing (Hullen, 1998).

The religious commitment affects the parenthood timing also in different ways in Catholic countries. In Flanders (where parenthood mainly occurs within marriage) the regularly practising Catholics are a distinctive group in that they become parents at a later age. Among women the effect is age-specific and much stronger at younger ages. The non-religious in Italy are very distinct in that they postpone (married) parenthood the most. In Poland where motherhood is to a lesser degree married motherhood, the young

regularly practising Catholics show a lower motherhood rate. In Austria where parenthood is to a lesser degree married parenthood, only the non-religious postpone it more strongly.

In the Netherlands married parenthood remains rather general. The fatherhood timing is positively affected by the frequency of church visits, whereas the motherhood timing negatively. In Britain the opposite can be observed: a positive effect on the motherhood rate and a negative one on the fatherhood rate. These contrasting effects of religion on motherhood and fatherhood need further explanation.

13.3.4   Impact of other relevant factors

For some countries the impact of *a parental divorce* – one of the core questions in the FFS model questionnaire - on the transition to adulthood was investigated. The prevalence of a parental divorce - disregarding the various ranges of FFS birth cohorts and the age of the respondents at the time of the survey - varied from 3 to 12 per cent. In general the effect of a parental divorce on the timing of the transition to adulthood is positive, in the sense that it accelerates. The available results allow for some more detail. According to Italian data, parental divorce is that seldom that no effect showed up. Sometimes the effect is event-specific, applying to only the first step, namely, leaving the parental home (women in Flanders and Austria, men in France and Austria). In Flanders, the experience of a parental divorce seems to have a different impact according to whether or not one gets married at the departure from the parental home (Corijn, 1996). In the French data the effect is negative for the first marriage timing among women only: those who experienced a parental divorce postpone their first marriage. The way the Polish data were analysed revealed that the effect only held in case of an early timing of all the events. Also the British data suggested an interaction with age. No study used the age at the parental divorce to make further distinctions.

These socio-demographic results on the impact of parental divorce are consistent with those from more socio-psychological studies on parent-child interactions, as by Bozon and Villeneuve-Gokalp (1994) for France. They are also in line with the state of developmental research as summarised at length in Chapter 2 (Goossens, this volume).

Some countries differentiated their analyses according to the *region* (Spain, Italy, Great Britain) or urban / rural residence during the childhood years (Spain, Poland, Austria). The effects are very much country-specific. For

instance, in Austria urban young adults have a first child later; in Poland the opposite is true.

13.4 | Conclusions

During destandardisation we can expect the impact of individual factors to increase relative to that of familial or structural factors.

Because not all countries involved in this study investigated the same list of determinants, it is not quite possible to compare the relative impact of individual versus other factors. Furthermore, since our cohort range was rather limited, it is also difficult to pinpoint changes in the relative importance of the different kinds of factors across time.

In this project the focus was mostly on the impact of individual factors because these are important determinants of the transition to adulthood, both in their socio-economic (enrolment, (un)employment, educational level) and more socio-cultural (educational level, religion) components. The direction in which these factors operate is not always the same for all countries, as was illustrated by the contrasting impact of unemployment on first motherhood. The strength of this factor is hard to compare when the models include different co-variates, but country-specific differences can be observed.

For some countries also the impact of familial factors was examined. These factors remain important determinants of the transition to adulthood, both in their socio-economic and socio-cultural components. When the impact of social class was investigated, it came out relevant. The experience of a parental divorce does make a difference for the kind and timing of the transition to adulthood. These results could and should be complemented by studies on socio-psychological aspects of the parent-child relationships.

The diversity in the results of some of the individual factors point to the importance of structural factors, including social policy factors. These factors were not investigated directly in this project, but they often surfaced as indirect explanatory factors: the institutionalisation of the school-work transition, the unemployment rate, the housing market, the prevailing family model. A structural factor such as region - with its socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics - does also play a role.

However, as data on values and opinions were too heterogeneous and no appropriate design was established to explore the interrelation between val-

ues and behaviour, the role of some socio-cultural aspects could not be tested straightforward.

In this project an attempt was made to articulate the theory on the transition to adulthood in more detail. The gender- and age-specificity was confirmed in many cases. Further specification of the theory must clarify the role of structural and social policy factors. Such a theory will need an appropriate data gathering design and appropriate multi-level analyses. This could be one of the challenges of a possible second FFS round.

In this volume, we have put together many different socio-demographic results and complemented them with some socio-psychological or developmental research findings. These first steps towards an integration of both kinds of research seem promising. If the aim really is to understand more of the transition to adulthood, this double research line should be further elaborated. At the same time, however, it will also be pertinent to interpret changes in the transition to adulthood more squarely in terms of differential globalisation trends and patterns.

13.5 | References

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