Moving Back to "Mamma"? Divorce, Intergenerational Co-residence and Family Solidarity in Sweden

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Draft – please do not cite without authors' permission
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ABSTRACT

One of the most obvious consequences of divorce, the moving out from the formerly common household, has received only limited scholarly attention. The study focuses on a particular post-divorce residential move, the return to the parental home in Sweden, where intergenerational co-residence is uncommon and non-normative. It is asked whether family dissolution increases the likelihood of intergenerational co-residence and whether the strength of the effect depends on socioeconomic and geographical factors. The analysis of over a million individuals from Swedish population register data showed that even if living with parents is, in absolute terms, not a common intergenerational support strategy, its likelihood increases considerably after a family dissolution. Family dissolution increases the probability of living with one's parents especially among men, those with low incomes, and those who lived close to their mother. The implications of the findings for the literature on patterns of intergenerational support across Europe are discussed.[1]

KEYWORDS: DIVORCE; SEPARATION; INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONS; CO-RESIDENCE; SWEDEN

[1] The authors wish to thank Ida Viklund for valuable research assistance. This work was supported by grants from: the Marco Polo Programme of the University of Bologna, the Nordforsk-funded project "Register-Based Life Course Studies: Sociological, Demographic, and Economic Perspectives" and the SUNSTRAT Guest Research Programme of the Swedish Institute for Social Research to Marco Albertini; the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research [FAS, dnr. 2006-1515] and the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare [FORTE, dnr. 2012-1741] to Michael Gähler; the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS, dnr. 2010-0831) to Juho Härkönen.

Increasing divorce and separation rates in most industrialized countries have generated a vast literature on their consequences, particularly on economic conditions, health, mortality, psychological adjustment, and social relationships (see, e.g., Amato 2000; Amato 2010). Ironically, one of the most obvious consequences of divorce, the moving out from the formerly common household, has received only limited scholarly attention, mainly in the field of housing studies (Symon 1990; Booth & Amato 1993; Freijten 2005; Gram-Hanssen & Bech-Danielsen 2008; Mulder & Wagner 2010; Mulder et al. 2012; Das, De Valk & Merz 2014). One, or often both, of separating partners has to almost by definition leave the previously common home. How divorcees solve their accommodation can depend on several factors, such as financial resources, demands on space, and distance to schools, work, and one's children but we continue to know relatively little about the effects of family dissolution on housing patterns.

In this paper, we focus on a particular residential move following divorce, the return to the parental home in Sweden. We ask whether family dissolution increases Swedish adult children's likelihood of co-residing with their parents and whether the strength of this effect varies by gender, economic resources, and place of residence. Analysis of these questions not only sheds light on post-family dissolution housing, but also on patterns of intergenerational support and Sweden is a particularly interesting case in this regard. The low prevalence of adult children's co-residence with their parents is often seen as a sign of an individualistic culture where independence is valued ahead of intergenerational ties and family solidarity (Reher 1998; Hank 2007; Iacovou 2010; Albertini & Kohli 2013). Furthermore, it has been suggested that Sweden's universalistic welfare state reduces reliance on the family or the market even at times of need (Esping-Andersen 1999). These features have led scholars to overlook intergenerational co-residence as a support strategy in Sweden and other Nordic and

Anglo-Saxon countries. We argue that latent family solidarity is activated at times of need and intergenerational co-residence, despite being non-normative and uncommon, is among the solutions to the housing needs induced by family dissolution.

We use longitudinal register data which cover the entire Swedish population, thus overcoming the limitations posed by small case numbers in the analysis of intergenerational co-residence in countries in which it is uncommon. The *Sweden in Time – Activities and Relations (STAR) database* contains accurate information on changes in civil status and residential moves and on a number of socio-economic conditions. We use data ranging from 2007 to 2012. Despite confirming that, in absolute terms, the utilization of re-cohabitation is a rarely adopted intergenerational support strategy in Sweden, our results show that the relative likelihood of intergenerational co-residence increases considerably when children divorce. Moreover, our study explores some of the most relevant factors leading divorced children to re-enter their parental home after separation. We discuss these findings in the light of the literature on intergenerational support patterns in Europe.

BACKGROUND

Already in 1988, in his study of the relation between the nuclear hardship hypothesis and support systems in pre-industrial Europe, Laslett suggested that family solidarity was particularly strong among the stem-family systems of Eastern and (some areas of) Southern Europe, while the role of collectivity prevailed among the Nordic European countries. The argument was based on empirical evidence showing that intergenerational co-residence was much more widespread among Mediterranean societies than in the UK and Scandinavia. Ten years later, in his article on family ties in Europe, Reher (1998: 203) suggested that "In the western world it is not difficult to identify areas where families and family ties are relatively 'strong' and others where they are relatively 'weak'" – with the former being identified with Southern European countries and the latter with continental and Nordic ones. Once more the

evidence supporting the argument was based on family living arrangements. Reher noted that intergenerational co-residence was frequently utilized in Southern Europe to support its most vulnerable members – i.e. the young adults and the elderly – while it was almost non-existent in Scandinavia. Recent research based on cross-national comparable surveys has added nuance and complexity to the views on intergenerational solidarity in Europe. Differently than suggested in the previous literature, it has been shown that the likelihood of intergenerational exchange of monetary and social support is higher in Nordic Europe than in the Mediterranean countries. On the other hand, the intensity of support (i.e. the amount of transferred resources) is the opposite (Albertini, Kohli & Vogel 2007). At the same time, this research has confirmed that intergenerational co-residence is quite rare in Northern European societies (Hank 2007; Albertini & Kohli 2013). These results suggest that Southern European parents support their children mainly through co-residence whereas in continental and Nordic societies co-residence is a non-normative support strategy: it is accepted and preferred that children and parents exchange support while not living under the same roof.

Studies on intergenerational relations have provided abundant empirical evidence showing that while parental divorce negatively affects parent-child relations, children's divorce prompts parental support. For example, an American study shows that divorced women and men receive emotional and practical support from parents to a higher extent than married individuals, and divorced women are also more likely to receive financial support (Sarkisian & Gerstel 2008). Similar findings are common to all western European societies, but what is generally maintained is that support strategies follow prevalent social norms and thus it is expected that a large share of divorced children in Southern Europe go back living with their parents, whereas most of the divorced children in the Nordic countries obtain social and economic support both from non-co-resident parents and the welfare state. For the U.S., in a family system which is close to that of Nordic European countries, Leahy Johnson (1988: p.

222) argues that "(s)uch an enduring solidarity [between parents and their divorced children], however, takes place in a kinship context in which such [intergenerational] obligations are not well spelled out and in a cultural context in which adult children are expected to be independent from their parents. Thus, despite the love and obligation evident between generations, most parents and adult children have difficulty in accepting the possibility of an adult child's return to a dependent status". Nevertheless, returning to the parental home in the U.S. is far from uncommon and DaVanzo and Goldscheider (1990) show that divorce is one of the strongest predictors for young adults to re-enter the parental nest. In the late 1980s, 13 percent of all divorced adult children in the U.S. were estimated to live in parent's home (White & Peterson 1995). Smits, van Gaalen and Mulder (2010), using longitudinal population register data, find that divorce is a strong predictor for offspring to move in with their parents also in the Netherlands. Studies also show that divorced individuals are much more likely than married individuals, but less likely than never-married individuals, to co-reside with their parent(s) (Grundy 2000 [England and Wales]; Messineo & Wojtkiewicz 2004; Sarkisian & Gerstel 2008 [the U.S.]; Ruggles & Heggeness 2008 [for a comparative study of developing countries]). Neither it is uncommon that young Swedes move back to live with their parents (although the large majority does not), at least for short time periods when they are still not fully established in the labor market (Nilsson & Strandh 1999). However, to the best of our knowledge, there is no previous study on the association between divorce and co-residence with parents.

Why do some divorcees move in with their parents and how do parents and children perceive this cohabitation? In their qualitative study of Irish divorcees and their parents, Timonen, Doyle and O'Dwyer (2011) suggest that it is mainly need on behalf of the adult child that guides intergenerational re-cohabitation, in particular needs connected with lacking economic resources, alternative (short-term) housing, and/or increasing childcare

responsibilities. Parents in general perceived co-residence to be imposed on them and their children due to the lack of alternative solutions. Parents also expressed feelings of ambivalence as they were struggling, on the one hand, between a wish to help their children (and grandchildren) after divorce and, on the other hand, the wish to set boundaries in order not to let their support exceed levels considered appropriate, thereby providing further evidence in line with both the intergenerational solidarity and ambivalence paradigms (Bengtson et al 2002; Luescher & Pillemer 1998; also see the review by Silverstein & Giarrusso 2010).

The importance of need as a strong force guiding intergenerational co-residence is confirmed in quantitative research. Income is positively associated with nest-leaving among adolescents and young adults, and negatively associated with returning to the nest. Moreover, tight housing markets delay the process of leaving the parental home whereas employment speeds it up and decreases the probability to return to the parental home (DaVanzo & Goldscheider 1990; Ermisch 1999; Nilsson & Strandh 1999).

A few previous studies of the consequences of marital breakups on individual housing careers also find evidence that support the importance of need. Low income and young age are the main factors leading separated people to re-enter cohabitation with their parents (Gram-Hansen & Bech-Danielsen 2008; Smits, Van Gaalen & Mulder 2010; Das, de Valk & Merz 2014).

As already noted, the lack of resources and need may not be the sole determinants of intergenerational co-residence. Cultural values, or preference, may also play an important role. In her comparative study, Iacovou (2010) confirms the positive impact of individual income on nest-leaving. This association is valid independently of the country studied. Thus, young people in most European countries exhibit a preference for independence, i.e. a wish to establish a household of their own, although this preference seems to be stronger in the

Nordic than in the Southern countries. The effects of *parental* income vary between countries, however, and indicate cross-country differences in parents' preference for children's independence. Whereas the association between income and child nest-leaving is positive and strong already from late teenage years in the Nordic countries, this association is *negative* up to much higher age in Southern Europe. Iacovou concludes that "Southern European parents do appear to value the co-residence of their offspring for much longer periods […] than parents in the Nordic countries; and they direct their resources accordingly" (2010: 159; also see Manacorda & Moretti 2006 for a similar conclusion).

THE SWEDISH CONTEXT

After divorce (from marriage) or separation (from cohabitation) either both spouses/partners leave for new housing or one of them stays in the formerly common housing. According to Swedish law (Äktenskapsbalken (marriage) and Sambolagen (cohabitation) respectively), the spouse/partner regarded to have the greatest need to stay should be given this right. This rule applies even when the spouse/partner is not the owner, but only if it is reasonable according to other circumstances, for instance that s/he has custody of common children, or if other extraordinary reasons exist (applies to cohabiting partners without children only). Under any circumstance, spouses/partners who stay in the formerly common housing, but do not own it or own it only partly, must compensate their former spouse/partner economically. This compensation is also based on how other assets and resources are divided between the spouses/partners.

Although underage children are still most likely to (mainly) live with their mothers following a divorce or separation between their parents, the situation has changed rapidly in later years. In 2012/2013 slightly more than half of these children, aged 0-17 years, lived only or mainly with their mother, one out of ten lived only or mainly with their father whereas 35 percent lived alternately with both parents. Thirty years earlier, only one percent of the

children with divorced or separated parents lived equally much with them (Statistics Sweden 2014). This development is likely to have increased the proportion of fathers staying in the formerly common housing over time.

HYPOTHESES

As argued above, parent-adult child co-residence is non-normative in Sweden. Therefore, when exploring the extent to which Swedish divorcees move in with their parent(s) after divorce we expect this to be uncommon, but also that divorced (from marriage) and separated (from cohabitation) individuals are overall more likely than partnered ones to live with their parents (*hypothesis 1*). Next, because mothers are more likely than fathers to be the custodial parent after divorce (despite the increasing trend in joint residential custody) and the fact that child custody gives priority in staying in the previously common home, we expect that divorced or separated men are more likely to co-reside with their parents than are women (*hypothesis 2*). Moreover, due to the general preference for intergenerational residential independence in Sweden, we assume that in most cases re-entering the parental home is a short-term solution to the residential needs arising after union dissolution. Thus, we hypothesize that the probability of parent-adult child co-residency decreases as time passes since divorce (*hypothesis 3*).

Concerning factors leading divorced children to re-enter their parental home after separation, we first consider the opportunity structure, and in particular whether parents live close to their adult child. Moving in with parents who live close by allows individuals to preserve their location-specific capital (Mulder & Wagner 2012) and we, thus, expect that separated individuals who in the year before lived in the same municipality as their parents are more likely to live with them (*hypothesis 4*). A further factor affecting the likelihood of going back living with parents is the economic needs of the child, that is, whether the divorced child has enough economic resources to finance new housing. Due to the non-

normative nature of parent-adult child co-residency we expect economic difficulties to be one of the main drivers of this phenomenon and, thus, that less affluent divorcees are more likely to "go back to mamma" (*hypothesis 5*). Finally, we expect that the need to re-enter the nest is affected also by the opportunities on the housing market and, thus, that the need is particularly acute in those areas of the country where the housing market is the tightest, i.e. the cities of Stockholm and Gothenburg (*hypothesis 6*).

DATA, VARIABLES AND METHODS

Data

We use data from *Sweden in Time – Activities and Relations (STAR)*, a compilation of Swedish administrative register data, which covers the entire Swedish population during the years 2007-2012. We combined annual data from the multigenerational register (which allows identification of each individual's parents), the register on changes in civil status, the Sickness Insurance and Labor Market Studies Database (LISA), including income data, and annual total population registers. The age range was restricted to 18-55. We excluded those born outside Sweden or to non-Swedish parents. Many of the parents of first and second generation immigrants reside abroad, which would mean that they could not have lived with their parents in the population we address. For the same reason, we also excluded the person-years in which one's natural parents were either dead or not residing in Sweden. Finally, our data is limited to parents. Unmarried cohabitation is not registered in the civil status registers and the data do not have unique apartment/dwelling level identifiers to identify cohabiting couples. The data do, however, have identifiers for "housing units", most commonly buildings (single-unit houses or apartment blocks). Assuming that biological or adoptive parents – of the same child(ren) - who live in the same "housing unit" also live in the same apartment enables us to identify co-residing and separated parents, but not childless cohabiting couples. Although with this limitation we lose many childless individuals who may especially likely move back

to their parents after a union dissolution, it provides a conservative test of whether adults use co-residence with parents as a strategy to cope with the consequences of family transitions. Our total population includes 1,757,848 individuals and 9,790,126 person-years (Table 1).

[Table 1 about here]

Variables

Our dependent variable is a dummy which is unity when the index person co-resides with at least one of his/her natural parents. The same limitations regarding identification of individual dwellings apply here as were already discussed above, but we regard living in the same housing unit (whether apartment block or single-unit house) as a good proxy for intergenerational co-residence. The data on where one resides refers to the situation at the end of the year.

We have two main independent variables, depending on the model we estimate (see below). The first is partnership status, which has four categories: intact couples (whether married or cohabiting, reference group), separated individuals, singles, and widows/widowers. Separation is our main event of interest, observed in the data as moving away from the common dwelling. Singles, on the other hand, are those who are never observed in a co-residential partnership with the other parent of the common child. Singles and widows/widowers are included as additional comparison groups in order to limit the reference group to intact couples. The second main independent variable adds a temporal component and is defined by the time since the family dissolution (intact family (reference), year of break-up, 1 year later, 2 years later, 3 years later, 4+ years later).

Our control variables are (i) age (which has been centred at age 18), and age squared; (ii) educational attainment (compulsory education (9 years or less), high school (reference), lower tertiary, and tertiary education); (iii) earnings (logged and centred); (iv) two dummies identifying whether the index person resided in the same municipality with the mother and/or

the father, respectively, the previous year; (v) two dummies to identify if the index person resided in one of the two largest cities of the country – Stockholm and Gothenburg - where housing markets are the tightest and co-residence with parents might be a more attractive/necessary solution.

Methods and analytical strategy

We analyze our panel data using fixed effects (FE) linear probability regression. FE models control for heterogeneity bias arising from unobserved variables that do not vary over time and the identification of the effects comes from comparing the outcome before and after the events of interest, that is, (changes in) the partnership statuses. This also reduces the number of cases from which coefficients are estimated, but this is not a problem for efficiency given our very large case numbers. The linear probability estimates show the changes in the probability of living with one's parent(s) in percentage points. An advantage of these models for our purposes is that the estimates are more directly comparable between models and groups (Mood 2010).

We estimate three types of models, separately for men and for women. The first model estimates the effects of the different partnership statuses, controlling for the additional variables, and tests our first and second hypotheses. The second model replaces the dummy for separations with dummies for time since separation as a test of hypothesis 3, i.e. how the probability of co-residing with one's parents develops over time after the separation. The third model is otherwise the same as the first model, but it adds interactions between the separation dummy and earnings, residence in the same municipality as the mother or father the previous year, and living in Stockholm or Gothenburg, respectively, as tests of hypotheses 4, 5 and 6. Given that our data contain the whole Swedish population, we do not present statistical significance levels, but nevertheless show the standard errors of the estimates as indications of the variation in the effect sizes.

RESULTS

As argued above, both comparative studies of pre-industrial European societies and research based on recent surveys indicate that co-residence between parents and their adult children — and, more specifically, the utilization of re-cohabitation as a support strategy — is rare and non-normative behavior in Sweden. Figure 1 confirms this. Only 2.3 percent of Swedish parents aged 18-54, born in Sweden to Swedish-born parents, live with their own parents. The proportion is slightly higher for men (2.7 percent) than for women (2.0 percent). There is, however, clear variation according to partnership status. Whereas widows and widowers do not deviate from the population at large, residing with one's parents is particularly common among single fathers (8.4 percent) — that is, those not observed to have been in a relationship — but also among separated fathers (4.4 percent). Single and separated mothers also have heightened prevalence of intergenerational co-residence, but the rates, 4.9 and 3.0 percent respectively, are nevertheless lower than among single and separated fathers. These results thus suggest that in times of need, intergenerational co-residence can still be a solution even in a country like Sweden. It is also a more common solution for men than for women.

[Figure 1 about here]

Table 2 presents the results from our fixed effects regression models. These results give a more accurate picture of how change in partnership status affects intergenerational co-residency by estimating the effects solely based on within-individual variation over time and control for time-constant unobserved factors, which can affect individual propensities for intergenerational co-residency.

Our focus is on the coefficients indicating the effects of separation on intergenerational co-residence. The results from the fixed-effects regressions are in line with the descriptive findings in confirming hypothesis 1 that family dissolution increases intergenerational co-

residence as compared to individuals in intact couples. Controlling for age, education, income, region, and whether the person lives in the same municipality as their mother and father, the effect is twice as strong for men (an increase of 4.0 percentage points) as for women (2.0 percentage points). The stronger effect for men is in line with our expectation that men will be more in need of intergenerational co-residency as they remain to be more likely to move out of the common home (hypothesis 2). Additional analyses (not shown), which distinguished between separations from marriages and cohabitations showed no differences in these effects by previous civil status.

The other estimates in Table 2 show that living outside Stockholm or Gothenburg, and living in the same municipality as one's parent (especially, the mother) the preceding year increases the probability of intergenerational co-residence whereas higher education, income and age decreases the likelihood to reside with the parents (although the marginal effect is decreasing with increasing age, as indicated by the quadratic term). The intraclass coefficient *rho* shows that three quarters of the remaining variation in intergenerational co-residency is between individuals.

The second regression model for men and women shows how the probability of intergenerational co-residence develops by time since the family break-up. In line with hypothesis 3, it is the highest immediately after the family dissolution, both for men and for women, and then decreases. However, we can also observe gender differences in the size of these effects as well as in how persistent they are. The immediate effect is both stronger and more persistent for men. Family dissolution increased men's probability of co-residing with their parent(s) by 3.5 percentage points immediately after the break-up and 2.5 percentage points still four years later, whereas the corresponding effect sizes for women are 2.0 and 1.2 percentage points. Although this does not mean that these men and women co-resided with their parent(s) all of the four post-dissolution years, the result shows that when it comes to

post-family dissolution residential arrangements, Swedish men resort to intergenerational co-residence more and for a longer time than women.

[Table 2 about here]

Table 3 shows the results from our third regression model. Here, interactions are introduced to test for hypotheses 4, 5 and 6. The main results of this table are that the effects of family dissolution on the probability of intergenerational co-residence are stronger for those whose mother lived in the same municipality the preceding year (in line with hypothesis 4), and for those with lower incomes (in line with hypothesis 5). Both of these interaction effects are stronger for men, and income in particular moderates the effect of family dissolution on men's intergenerational co-residence. Having a mother who lived in the same municipality the previous year strengthens the effect of family dissolution: for men, the effect is about 25 % stronger (0.009 / 0.037) and for women, the effect of family dissolution is about 33 % (0.006 / 0.017) stronger when the mother lived in the same municipality. The finding that post-dissolution co-residence is dependent on proximity to the mother, but not the father, suggests that when their parents do not live together, adult Swedes prefer to move to "mamma" and not "pappa" in times of need, which may show the more central role of women as kin keepers. The relatively weak strengthening effect of living in the same municipality also, however, suggests that many divorcees move to co-reside with a parent in another municipality after family dissolution.

Differently from what we expected (hypothesis 6), the effects of family dissolution on intergenerational co-residence do not vary by place of residence. Thus, it seems that a tight housing market does not play any important role in the decision to going back to mamma or not after union dissolution. This can also reflect that parents in these cities may have less space to house their adult children. Altogether, these results suggest that, in Sweden,

intergenerational co-residence is a solution to family dissolution particularly among low-income men, who can face an especially acute housing need if they are the ones who have to move away following the break-up.

[Table 3 about here]

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Based on the finding that intergenerational co-residence is relatively rare in Sweden and other Scandinavian countries, some scholars have argued that family solidarity and family ties are weak in these countries whereas they are strong in countries where intergenerational co-residence is widespread (Laslett 1988; Reher 1998). Against this claim, we have shown that latent family solidarity can be activated in times of need also in Sweden. Of all divorced or separated Swedish men and women who have children, 4 percent live with their parents. This figure, even if it refers to all Swedish adults who have separated from the other parent of their child, can be considered small but it hides the fact that the probability of living with one's parents in strongly increased by family dissolution, especially in the short-run. For many, co-residing with their parents is a short-term solution and a step before moving on to an independent living, but an increased likelihood of intergenerational co-residence is visible even four years after the family dissolution. Furthermore, these estimates can be considered as conservative ones, as they are based solely on parents and that we may miss some short periods of co-residence (i.e. those who were not co-residing with their parents at the end of the calendar year, when the register is updated). We could expect the proportions to be even higher if we were to include non-parents in the analyses, given that, first, it is easier for parents to host a single adult than a single-parent family and, second, welfare state arrangements are in place to provide children and their families with housing to a higher extent than single adults. Given how clearly family dissolution increases the likelihood of

living with one's parents, it is surprising that the topic has been almost neglected in divorce research in Sweden but also elsewhere.

We are not able to tell whether intergenerational co-residence is due to preferences or adult children not being able to find new housing, but results from previous studies indicate that parents view this as imposed on them and that they are forced to help their children due to a lack of alternatives (Timonen, Doyle & O'Dwyer 2011). Our results indeed suggest that need is a strong factor governing the process of re-cohabitation between adult children and their parents. The lower the child's income, the higher is the likelihood that s/he will move in with his/her parents after a divorce. This is a finding that adheres to previous international studies in the field (DaVanzo & Goldscheider 1990; Gram-Hansen & Bech-Danielsen 2008; Smits, Van Gaalen & Mulder 2010; Timonen et al. 2011; Das, de Valk & Merz 2014). On the other hand, our findings also suggest that the overwhelming majority of Swedish divorcees have the financial means to meet the preference for independent living. Against our expectations, the effect of family dissolutions on living with one's parents was no stronger in Stockholm and Gothenburg, Sweden's biggest cities and those with the tightest housing markets, than other parts of the country. This can reflect that there is now an increasing lack of housing also outside the large cities (National Board of Housing, Building and Planning 2013) or that parents living in larger cities have less opportunity to accommodate their children due to smaller housing (Statistics Sweden 2009). A limitation of our study is that we do not have any information on the housing characteristics of the parents. Nevertheless, other opportunities for intergenerational co-residence increase its likelihood in the face of family dissolution as divorced adult children are more likely to re-enter the nest when the mother lives in the same municipality as them. A similar effect was not found for fathers. This is in accordance with previous findings showing that adult children with divorced and separated parents remain in closer contact with their mothers than with their fathers (see, e.g., Daatland 2007; de Graaf &

Fokkema 2007; Kalmijn 2008). However, living in the same municipality had a relatively weak strengthening effect of family dissolution on co-residence. This suggests that many cross municipality borders to live with their parents in the face of divorce and separation.

Finally, as expected, we find that men are more likely than women to "go back to mamma", probably at least partly due to the fact that mothers are still more likely than fathers to take main responsibility for children after divorce and separation. This finding should not, however, be straightforwardly interpreted as a sign of a disadvantaged position for Swedish fathers vis-à-vis mothers when experiencing divorce. Studies from other contexts show that, as time passes since the family dissolution, women are more likely than men to experience downward housing moves, such as from owner-occupied to rental dwellings, and from single family to multiple unit dwellings (Freijten 2005; Mulder & Wagner 2012).

Our findings have implications beyond the literature on family dissolution and housing. It has been suggested that European countries should be distinguished by the strength of their family ties. For countries where ties are defined as weak, such as England, Sweden and the United States, it has been claimed that "the individual and individual values have had the priority over everything else" (Reher 1998: 203) and it has been forecasted that "[t]he English, the Americans and the Swedes will continue to maintain their commitments to individualism and to residential autonomy" (p. 221). The view of Sweden as characterized by weak family ties has been widely, and sometimes uncritically, accepted. Our results, together with other recent studies (e.g. Albertini & Kohli 2013), provide evidence, however, that the role of the family as a safety net is strong in Sweden too. Faced with the pressuring needs of a child going through a divorce, the latent solidarity of Swedish families materializes and it even goes so far in supporting needy children as to adopt a non-normative support strategy: co-residence. Swedish families, as families in most other European countries (Iacovou 2010), prefer residential autonomy. However, this does not, as has sometimes been suggested, imply

that Swedish families are not able and available to mobilize their resources to support their members. There is a strong latent family solidarity that emerges in times of need when other alternatives are missing. Thus, maybe it is time to challenge the label of "weak-family systems" when referring to Swedish family ties.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: *Data characteristics: means and percentages (person years).*

Partnership status (%)	
Intact union	61.8
Separated	18.2
Widowed	0.5
Single	10.5
Education	
Compulsory education (%)	10.4
High school	52.1
Lower tertiary	6.8
Tertiary	30.6
Same municipality as mum (lagged, %)	53.4
Same municipality as dad (lagged, %)	48.8
Stockholm (%)	6.0
Gothenburg (%)	3.8
Rest of country (%)	90.2
Age (mean)	43.2
Earnings (in 100 SEK)	2984.9
N individuals	1,757,848
N person-years	9,790,126

Source: Sweden in Time – Activities and Relationships (STAR) register database, person-years.

Table 2. Partnership status and intergenerational co-residence, fixed effects linear probability regressions.

	Men with children				Women with children			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	B	s.e.	b	s.e.
Partnered	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
Separated	0.040	0.001			0.020	0.001		
Single	0.090	0.004	0.063	0.004	0.029	0.002	0.015	0.002
Widowed	0.017	0.004	-0.017	0.004	0.008	0.002	-0.009	0.002
Year of break-up			0.035	0.001			0.020	0.001
1 year after			0.028	0.001			0.014	0.001
2 years after			0.025	0.001			0.011	0.001
3 years after			0.024	0.002			0.012	0.001
4 years after			0.026	0.002			0.012	0.002
Age	-0.002	0.000	-0.002	0.000	-0.001	0.000	-0.001	0.002
Age squared	0.0001	0.0000	0.0001	0.0000	0.0001	0.0000	0.000	0.000
Compulsory education	0.017	0.007	0.018	0.007	0.012	0.003	0.012	0.003
Secondary education	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
Lower tertiary education	0.000	0.002	-0.000	0.003	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001
Tertiary education	0.000	0.003	-0.000	0.003	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001
Same municipality as mother	0.015	0.002	0.015	0.002	0.008	0.001	0.008	0.001
Same municipality as father	0.009	0.002	0.009	0.002	0.007	0.001	0.007	0.001
Logged incomes	-0.001	0.000	-0.016	0.001	-0.0004	0.0001	-0.005	0.001
Rest of country	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
Stockholm	-0.012	0.003	-0.010	0.003	-0.009	0.002	-0.009	0.002
Gothenburg	-0.013	0.004	-0.013	0.004	-0.007	0.003	-0.007	0.003
Constant	0.012	0.003	0.054	0.003	0.010	0.001	0.023	0.002

Rho	0.76		0.76		0.73		0.73	
N individuals	488,426		488,426		575,539		568,715	
Person-years	2,200,785		2,200,785		3,100,043		2,583,312	
F(df1)	158.07	(13)	116.76	(17)	74.82	(13)	56.98	(17)

Source: Sweden in Time – Activities and Relationships (STAR) register database, person-years.

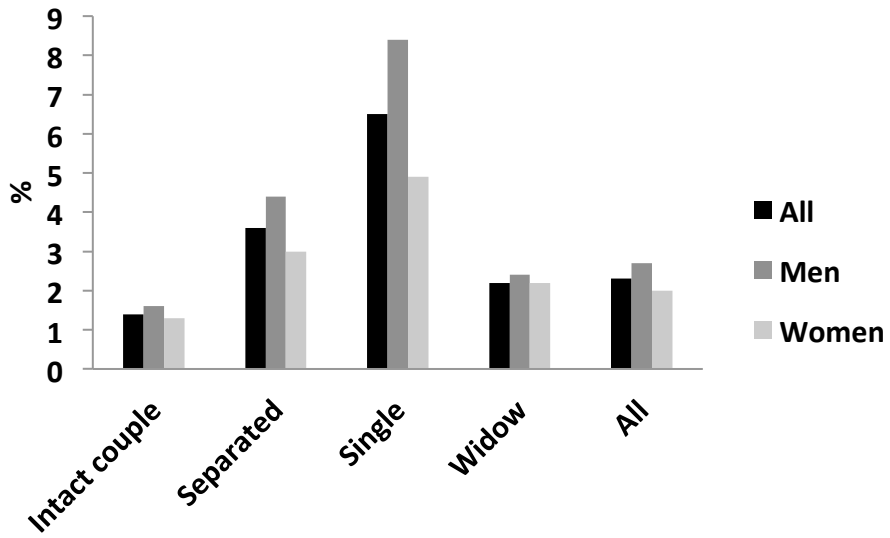
Table 3. Partnership status and intergenerational co-residence, fixed effects linear probability regressions with interactions.

	Men with children		Women with children	
	Model 3		Model 3	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Partnered	Ref.		Ref.	
Separated	0.037	0.001	0.017	0.001
Single	0.091	0.004	0.030	0.002
Widowed	0.017	0.004	0.008	0.002
Age	-0.002	0.002	-0.001	0.000
Age squared	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Compulsory education	0.018	0.007	0.013	0.003
Secondary education	Ref.		Ref.	
Lower tertiary education	-0.000	0.003	0.000	0.001
Tertiary education	-0.000	0.003	0.000	0.001
Rest of country	Ref.		Ref.	
Stockholm	-0.010	0.003	-0.009	0.002
Gothenburg	-0.013	0.004	-0.009	0.004
Same municipality as mother	0.013	0.002	0.007	0.001
Same municipality as father	-0.001	0.003	0.007	0.001
Logged incomes	-0.0005	0.0002	-0.0002	0.0001
Separated*Stockholm	-0.003	0.004	-0.001	0.003
Separated*Gothenburg	-0.000	0.005	0.005	0.004
Separated*Log incomes	-0.0036	0.0004	-0.001	0.002
Separated*Same municipality as mother	0.009	0.003	0.006	0.002
Separated*Same municipality as father	-0.001	0.003	-0.001	0.002
Constant	0.012	0.002	0.011	0.001

Rho	0.76		0.74	
N individuals	488,426		568,715	
Person-years	2,200,785		2,583,312	
F(df1)	116.48	(18)	56.44	(18)

Source: Sweden in Time – Activities and Relationships (STAR) register database, person-years.

FIGURE 1: PROBABILITY OF PARENT-CHILD CO-RESIDENCE BY PARTNERSHIP STATUS (PARENTS ONLY, %).



Source: Sweden in Time – Activities and Relationships (STAR) register database, person-years.