Does cohabitation provide weaker intergenerational bonds than marriage? A comparison between Italy and the United Kingdom.

Tiziana Nazio

University of Turin

&

Chiara Saraceno

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung

Draft

(Please, do not quote or cite without permission)

Summary

In the literature, cohabitation rather than marriage is presented as an indicator of weakening intergenerational ties, either as a cause or an effect. In this paper we compare the frequency of face to face and telephone contacts in two countries – Italy and the UK – where the incidence of cohabiting instead of, or before, marrying is very different. Our analysis of empirical evidence, based on an ordered category response multilevel model, does not support the hypothesis that in the former country, where cohabitation is still an exception, differences in parent-adult children contacts between cohabitant and married children are much greater than in the latter, where cohabitation is more common and since a long time. While in the UK cohabitation does not seem to have an impact on frequency of contacts, in Italy, cohabitation only lowers slightly the proportion of those who visit daily and increases the (marginal) proportion of those who have no contacts, but not the frequency of phone contacts. Also the hypothesis that duration of cohabitation makes a difference is not supported. The main difference we found, in both countries, is that cohabitant couples tend to live farther away from their parents than married ones. This affects frequency of face to face contacts. These data support the thesis that in the UK cohabitation and marriage are becoming increasingly similarly accepted patterns of partnership formation, which do not affect in distinct ways intergenerational relationships. They also support the thesis that, in Italy, cohabiting instead of marrying is a polarized phenomenon: in the majority of cases it is supported, if not rendered possible, by parents, while in a small minority is accompanied by estrangement. The differential strategies of residential choices by married and cohabitant couples, in both countries, remain, however, an open issue.

Introduction

Recent studies (e.g. Kohli 1999, Attias Donfut and Wolff 2000, Kohli and Kunemund 2003, Grundy 1999, Grundy and Henretta 2006) have documented the persistent strength of intergenerational solidarity throughout Europe. Increasing life expectancy offers in principle the opportunity for unprecedented durations of bi- and even tri-intergenerational relationships. It is possible to become adult and old having both parents alive, to see one's own grand children become adults and even parents, to have all four grandparents throughout one's childhood and, for a while, even a great-grandparent, usually a great grandmother (e.g. Harper 2005, Saraceno 2008). Yet, changes in family relationships and in the way families are formed and perceived raise concern over the persistence of intergenerational solidarity in a context of population ageing. Particularly, changes in patterns of family formation and dissolution are putting at risk those same relationships which increasing life expectancy has theoretically rendered more available than in the past. Childlessness is exposing many elderly to a lack of intergenerational ties (see the two special 2007 issues of the *Journal of family Issues* devoted to this theme). When children are present, divorce weakens intergenerational ties (e.g. Aquilino 1994 and the review by Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan, 1997; Dykstra 1997; Eggebeen and Knoester 2001; Amato 2003; Kalmin 2008; Albertini and Saraceno 2008). And there is a growing concern that also the increasing popularity of cohabitation instead of marriage, representing an institutionally weaker and more instable relationship, also represents a risk for intergenerational relationships and solidarity. Marriage, in fact, has been the traditional means to connect generations, in the dual sense of being the means of legitimate reproduction from one generation to the next over time and of keeping the link with both bloodlines.

Research data on the impact on intergenerational relationships of cohabitation instead of marriage are less systematic and rich than those concerning the impact of divorce and also offer less straightforward evidence. This study intends to contribute to clarify some of the conceptual and methodological problems. It will also offer some evidence on the issue of similarity vs. difference of cohabitation and marriage with regard to contact between parents and adult children in two countries – Italy and the UK – that

differ both in the degree to which cohabitation is widespread and with regard to the overall intensity of contacts between parents and adult children.

With regard to the former phenomenon, in Italy the incidence of – heterosexual – cohabitations has remained fairly stable until recently. It has increased between the 1991 and 2001 censuses; yet in 2001 it included still only about 4% of all couples. Marriage is still by large the prevalent form of settling in a first couple relationship, although recent data (see Rosina and Fraboni 2004; Gruppo di coordinamento per la demografia, 2007) indicate that in the younger marriage cohorts one every 4 marriages has been preceded by a cohabitation and cohabitations have also increased in duration. Furthermore, in Italy, cohabiting instead of marrying for a long time has involved not the young entering their first partnership, but adults in their mature years who had experienced already a marriage dissolution. The impossibility to obtain a divorce until 1970 and the long process through which it can be obtained at present, in fact, impose a long waiting period during which one cannot remarry.[1] Only in recent years cohabitation has started to involve increasingly the young in Italy.

In the UK, differently from Italy, cohabitation as a prelude or alternative to marriage has emerged in the seventies and has rapidly risen to being now the most common way to begin a first co-residential union (Ermisch and Di Salvo 1997; Kiernan 2002; Barlow et al. 2001). Among the first partnerships initiated in the nineties, over three fourths were cohabitations, compared to one third in the seventies (Ermisch & Francesconi 2000). Differently from the Nordic countries, in the UK childbearing is still rarer in cohabitation than that in marital unions, though increasing, probably because the duration of cohabiting unions is comparatively shorter. Ermish (2005) estimates a median duration of two years in the United Kingdom, after which around half of those initiated in the nineties were converted into marriage and the remaining dissolved. Cohabitations, therefore, in the UK have a marked feature of pre-marital unions.

With regard to patterns of contacts between generations, it is well known that Italy is among the developed countries with the highest frequency of contacts, as well as of

[1] One must first obtain a legal separation, and then wait for at least three years (five until 1987) before applying for a divorce. As a consequence, there is a time period of at least 4-5 years between the actual end of a marriage and it legal dissolution.

residential proximity between generations (see e.g. Höllinger and Haller 1990; Reher 1998, Kalmijn and Saraceno 2008).

Theories and research questions

Two different, but partly interlinked, theoretical approaches lie behind the concern that the growing popularity of cohabitation instead of marriage may weaken intergenerational contacts and solidarity. The first is the individualization theory, in its various versions (Giddens 1992; Beck 1992; Beck and Beck Gernsheim 2002). According to this theory, preference for cohabitation over marriage is the result of growing individualization (Mills 2000). Individuals are no longer willing to enter institutionalised and long term binding relationships; when they enter a couple relationship, they prefer to cohabit, rather than marrying, because they wish to keep their options and their negotiations open (e.g. Wu, 2000). But this has consequences on intergenerational relationships. Since it is not institutionalized, cohabitation does not construct cross-couple kinship obligations. Each partner does not feel specific moral or social obligations towards the other partner's family. If contacts are limited to individual ones (i.e. each partner visits his/her parents separately), their frequency will be almost automatically reduced - even more so since it is women who, in marriage, often keep contact – or mediate contact – also between their husbands and their in laws. If in a cohabitation women do not perform this kin work also for their partner (or do it less), the latter's intergenerational relations may be comparatively reduced.

The second approach, the diffusion theory (e.g. Braun and Engelhardt 2004, Palloni 2001), does not treat cohabitation as a uniform phenomenon. Rather, it introduces time and degree of diffusion as important dimensions to understand the meaning of cohabitation (instead of marriage) for the individuals concerned as well as for the surrounding social context, particularly family and kin (Nazio and Blossfeld 2003, Nazio, 2008). When cohabitation instead of marriage is rare and the phenomenon is just beginning, those who choose it perceive themselves and are perceived as transgressors and/or innovators. In this perspective, they may also be defined as highly individualized and their behaviour may be difficult to be accepted by their families/parents. After the diffusion of cohabitation has reached a threshold, however, it is no longer perceived as an

innovative or transgressing behaviour; thus we might say that also its individualization dimension is weaker, in so far it is an accepted and even expected behaviour. As a consequence, we might expect different patterns of intergenerational relationships according to the stage of diffusion of the phenomenon. Furthermore, since cohabiting relationships are less (legally) binding unions, exhibiting a higher dissolution rate than marriages (Ermisch 2005; Wu 2000; Steele et al. 2005 and 2006; Mills 2000), they are, also, a less secure target for the huge monetary investment that a housing purchase may require. This is particularly relevant in the Southern European countries, where buying traditionally has been relatively more convenient than renting and it has been also supported by fiscal policies (e.g. Nazio 2008; Kurz & Blossfeld 2004; Bernardi and Poggio 2004; Poggio 2008; Chiuri and Jappelli 2000). Especially when intergenerational transfer of capital is required, it is more likely that it takes place to benefit a married rather than a cohabiting union, strengthening the ties (and sense of reciprocity) between parental and children generations. Barbagli, Castiglione and Dalla Zuanna (2003), however, argue that this was the case in Italy until recently, although, following an increased acceptance of cohabitation by the parental generation among the better educated and living in the Centre-North, this difference in supporting married and cohabiting children in buying their own dwelling is disappearing. We may, therefore, expect that there are more differences in the frequency of intergenerational contacts and patterns of solidarity with their parents between married and cohabitant adult children in countries with a recent and still comparatively small diffusion of cohabitation than in countries where this practice is more widespread and it has been so for some time.

A recent study by Di Giulio and Rosina (2006, see also Rosina and Fraboni 2004) has offered a partly alternative formulation of the diffusion model, developed specifically from the perspective of the Italian context. While Nazio and Blossfeld argue that what is crucial in the diffusion of cohabitation – among the young – is peer experience, these authors argue that in strong family ties and weak welfare state countries like Italy, which render parental support crucial, cohabitation may become widespread only when the parental generation demonstrates a clear and supportive acceptance. As a consequence, cohabitation may cause intergenerational tensions when it is rare because the parental generation is not willing to support children who chose it instead of marriage. But it

might also be the outcome of close intergenerational bonds when the parental generation is ready to support them. The increase in cohabitating unions among the young, particularly in the Centre-North, in parallel with parents' education, offers some support to this thesis.

A third, less developed theory of possible differences between the frequency of child-parents contacts among cohabitant vs. married children equals the consequences of cohabitation to those of divorce, based on the, empirically partly founded, assumption that cohabitations are more unstable than marriages (e.g. Steele et al .2005 and 2006; Mills 2000; Ermisch 2005; Wu 2000; Kiernan 2002; Blossfeld et al. 1993). This theory, however, does not concern the existence of differences in patterns of intergenerational relationships between cohabitants and married adults, but the higher vulnerability to the negative consequences of couple's break up in the case of the former. That is, it hypothesizes that, as cohabitation becomes a widespread phenomenon reducing the space for marriage, given its higher vulnerability to break up, more intergenerational relationships will suffer the same kind of limitation or interruption found in the case of divorce.

Empirical evidence on the impact of cohabitation on intergenerational relationships is not only scanty, but also conceptually and methodologically muddled. In the first place, studies concern mostly cohabitant adult children, not cohabitant elderly parents, given the rare diffusion of cohabitation among the elderly in all countries. Thus, one cannot, as it happens instead in the case of divorce, measure the impact of cohabitation also in the parents', but only in the children's generation. In the second place, studies rarely distinguish between different forms of cohabitation, particularly between those entered as a temporary relationship and those entered as a form of stable life alternative to marriage, those entered when young as the first form of partnership and those entered later in life, often after a marriage. This lack of distinction biases results at two levels (see also Harper 2004, Kiernan 2000). First, a large part of cohabitations involve young people. Cohabitations, therefore, include to a larger degree than marriages people who are still involved in what developmental psychologists would define the developmental task of distancing themselves from their parents in order to become their own person. Young newly married couples are also often engaged in defining their own social space,

relationships and rituals, marking their difference from their respective parental homes. Once a couple is well established as such, this boundary setting behaviour may appear less necessary and at the same time new needs – the arrival of a child, a parent becoming frail - may affect intergenerational relationships. Furthermore, cohabitations among the young are often temporary and entered as such. Consequently, the partners do not particularly feel involved in each other's family. In order to understand whether cohabitation in the generation of adult children, compared to marriage, has actually a weakening impact on intergenerational relations, therefore, both age and duration must be kept under control. The recent findings by Daatland (2007) for Norway, based on the Norwegian Life Course, Ageing and Generation Study, support this. While these findings support also for Norway a negative impact of divorce on parents-child relationship, for both mothers and fathers (although more for the latter), in fact, they show no evidence of difference in the most important dimensions of intergenerational solidarity (contacts, exchange of help, feeling of closeness) for cohabitant and married children *vis a vis* their parents. In their sample, children are aged 40 and over. Their couple relationships are on average more established than among younger children; and the relatively high age of their parents also is conducive to higher contact frequency than when parents are younger. These two characteristics might explain the similarity in behaviour between married and cohabitant children.

Does similarity hold only for countries, such as Norway, where cohabitation is widespread as a mode of union formation, and where – as in other Scandinavian countries – contacts between kin are relatively reduced also among married couples compared to Continental and Southern European countries (see e.g. Kalmijn and Saraceno 2008)? In other words, is it the outcome both of a high cultural legitimization of cohabitation and of a "loose" embeddedness of households in kinship networks? Or does this similarity point to the fact that long term cohabitation – be it a widespread phenomenon or a relatively exceptional, therefore potentially deviant, one – is assimilated to marriage in the everyday dealings of kinship by all the persons involved?

In order to answer this question one would need a complex simultaneously longitudinal and comparative study, including data on values and attitudes. More modestly, in the study presented here we wish to test the following three hypotheses.

H. 1. Following the diffusion theory, differences in the frequency of adult child-parents contacts between cohabitant and married children are greater in Italy than in the UK, given the lower diffusion and therefore lower social legitimization of cohabitation in the former country. This hypothesis, however, must be qualified in the light, on the one hand, of Di Giulio and Rosina's (2006) proposal, according to which the diffusion of cohabitation among the young in Italy implies a stronger explicit acceptance by parents than in other countries. Cohabitants in this country may be more polarized than in the UK between those who are supported by their partents in their choice and those who are not. On the other hand, one must consider that the stock of cohabitants in Italy is to a large degree constituted by no longer young individuals who cannot (yet) marry. They are in a different life stage compared to the young, also in their relationships with their parents, who are on average older, a condition which is known to be positively linked to contacts and support by adult children. Thus, in Italy cohabitants might be both a more polarized and a more selectivegroup than in the UK, not only because of the characteristics of "innovation" of their behaviour, but because of the characteristics which favour, or in some case even force, cohabitation instead of marriage. For the young, this selectivity concerns not only individual cultural attitudes, but also the active support by parents; for older cohabitants, it concerns the likelihood that one, or both, partners come from a previous marriage experience and are on average of more mature age. Both these characteristics might affect positively contacts, reducing the hypothesized negative impact of cohabitation.

H. 2. Duration counts. If there are differences at all, we hypothesize that they decrease with duration of cohabitation.

H.3 Also presence of children counts, in so far children have generally a connecting role between generations and becoming a parent/grandparent may encourage more frequent contacts also in the case of cohabitation of the younger parental couple.

Data and methods

This study makes use of the Indagine Multiscopo Famiglie e Soggetti sociali (Istat, 2003), a survey conducted in Italy by the Italian National Statistical Office (ISTAT), which contains also a retrospective section, and of wave 14 of the British Household

Panel Study (2001). The Italian survey was fielded in November 2003 and covered around 24,000 households, for an amount of about 50,000 individuals. A sub-sample of 13503 individuals living in 8163 co-resident heterosexual couples (regardless of presence of other household members), aged between 25 and 69 years, with at least one living parent have been selected for the analyses, making for 21117 dyadic child-parent relationships. For the British sample, we selected with the same criteria 3389 individuals within 1970 households, amounting to 5496 dyads.

The two surveys are only partly comparable, not only because the Italian one is richer, but also the items addressing similar topics are not always identical.

We make use of an ordered category response multilevel model, which comprises three levels (beside that of the responses): the dyadic relationships of children to their living parents (level 1); the adult children themselves (level 2); and the couple (married vs. cohabitant) they are part of (level 3). The two dependent variables of the multinomial models are the frequency of individuals' visits and phone calls to non co-resident parents: measured on a five points scale ranging between 1=never and 5=daily. Given the slight difference between the two national originally six points scales[2], we have homogenised the values in a five points scale as follows: 1=never, 2=several times a year or less often for the UK/sometimes a year for Italy, 3=at least once a month in the UK/ sometimes a month in Italy, 4=at least once a week in the UK/ weekly or sometimes a week in Italy, 5=daily. Figure 1 presents the distribution of frequencies of these variables by marital status of the individuals (relative percentages to the total of married/cohabitant individuals in the samples). We can see that, irrespective of the type of couple, Italians have a pattern of more frequent visits and phone calls to their parents than the British: 78% of the former visit their parents at least once a week, against around 50% of the latter. This difference is mirrored by the closer proximity in which Italians live with respect to British: 76% of the former live within a distance of 16 Km., whereas only 61% of the latter live within half an hour from their parents. Unfortunately the two surveys

[2] in the Italian case the original six point scale comprised more categories towards high frequencies of visits (daily; sometimes a week; weekly; sometimes a month; sometimes a year; never), whereas the British scale comprised more categories towards the lower frequencies (daily; at least once a week; at least once a month; several times a year; less often; never)

used two different measures to assess distance and we are aware that they are only superficially comparable.

[Figure 1 around here]

The variables adopted for the analyses can be distinguished between the three levels at which they are specified.

At level 1 (dyads), the variables are: the daughter-mother dyads (reference), the daughter-father dyads the son-mother and son-father dyads; parents' age (ranging from 40 to 101 and centred around 70 for Italy; ranging between 42 and 100 and centred around 64 for the UK); two measures of the distance between children and each of their parents. The first is measured on a scale from 1 to 7 for Italy (other flat, same building; within 1 km.; same city; other city <16 km.; other city 16-50 km.; other city >50 km.; abroad) and 1 to 6 for the UK (< 15 min.s; 15-30 min.s ; 30 min.s - 1 hour; 1-2 hours; > 2 hours; abroad) (centred at 3=living in the same city for Italy and 2=15-30 minutes for the UK). The second is operationalised *via* two dummies for medium (1/2 to 2 hours for the UK and 16-50 Km. for Italy) and large (above 2 hours or 50 Km. for UK and Italy respectively) distances. In addition, we have a set of dummy variables linked to the parental household characteristics. The reference category is living in couple without children for Italy and living in couple for the UK). The other items are living with a partner with (some other) children, living alone, living without the spouse/partner, but with children, or living in other condition (mostly a retirement home) for Italy. For the UK, given the fewer information available, they include only living alone and living in other condition (including with other children, if applicable). Finally, we consider the frequency of phone calls to one's own parent, measured in a scale from 1 to 6 for the UK (the same as for visits and distance, centred around the average value 4=at least once a month) and on a scale from 1 to 6 for Italy (the same as for visits, centred around the average value 3=some times a month).

At level 2 (adult children), we have made use of: age at interview (ranging from 25 to 69, centred around the averages of 42 years for Italy and 37 years for the UK); level of education measured on a scale from 1 (PhD) to 9 (illiterate) for Italy (centred around the

average value of 5=higher education for 2-3 years after compulsory education) and from 1 (University or CNAA Higher Degree) to 13 (no qualification) for the UK (centred around the average value of 7=GCE O levels or equivalent[3]); whether the respondent is working (inactive or unemployed is the reference category) and, for the UK only, whether he/she is working on a part-time basis (working full-time becomes the reference); whether the respondent has living siblings and, for Italy only, their number.

At level 3 (couples) we used: duration of cohabitation/marriage measured in months, but expressed in years[4] and centred around the mean value for cohabiting unions which ranges from 0 to 47,6 years for Italy (with an average duration of 6 years for cohabiting couples and 16,3 for married ones) and from 0 to 50 years for the UK (with average duration of 4 and 11,5 for cohabitant and married respectively); type of union (cohabitation or marital); presence of children below 16 years of age for the UK, and between 0 to 2 years for Italy[5].

In Model 5 (Tables 3 and 4) a few country specific variables are tested. For the UK, at level 2 we tested a measure of self-assessed health status of the respondent over the past 12 months[6] (measured on a 5 points scale), when judged as poor or very poor (reference being very good, good or fair). At level 3, we tested the housing tenure, whether rented (reference being owned). For Italy, at level 1 we tested the educational level of the parents on a scale from 1 to 9 (as for children's education, but centred around the average value of 7=elementary education) and parental poor health status as assessed by his/her child[7]; at level 2, we tested whether, since living independently from the parental family, the respondent reported having incurred into "serious economic difficulties" and if so, whether he/she received some help from his/her parents.

---

[3] This category comprises in detail: O Levels (pre 1975), O Level grades A-C (1975 or later), GCSE grades A-C, CSE grade 1, Scottish O Grades (pass or bands A-C or 1-3), Scottish School Leaving Certificate Lower Grade, School Certificate or Matric, Scottish Standard Grade Level 1-3 or City & Guilds Certificate (Craft/Intermediate/Ordinary/Part I)

[4] In the British case, this variable was built from the reconstruction of partnership histories collected in waves 2 and 3, in combination with information collected in all waves until the 11th. In case of discordant or missing information for one of the partners, the most recent (available) information was chosen.

[5] Different specifications have also been tested in the models in the Italian case, comprising the number of children below 18 and different thresholds for the age of smallest child.

[6] A similar variable was implemented in the analyses for Italy too, but is not included in the models presented here because it never proved statistically significant.

[7] The original wording asked about a chronic illness which reduced personal autonomy to the point of requiring support for daily needs: answer "yes, repeatedly and for major needs" was codified as "poor health", as against "no" and "yes, discontinuously and for some needs" (reference category).

Table 1 reports some descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables used in the analyses for the two countries.

[Table 1 around here]

Table 2 reports the frequency for three of the central variables used in the analyses: the frequency of visits and phone calls (in their original format), and the distance. These figures highlight a substantial difference between the Italian and the British contexts: although most children, overall, tend to live quite close to their parents (over 60% lives within half an hour reach or within 16 km. in both countries, as shown in the bolded figures in the upper part of Table 2), Britons tend to phone their parents less frequently (on average), and to visit them more sparingly. For example, over 28% of British adult children visit their parents less often than monthly, as opposed to only 12% of Italians; at the opposite extreme, 37% of Italians declare to be visiting them on a daily basis, as against about 11% of British. As expected, the correlation between the frequency of visits and distance is -0,69 for the UK and -0,72 for Italy, suggesting that physical proximity is an important factor in the opportunity and costs of maintaining direct contacts between adult children and their parents. The correlation between visits and phone calls, however, is 0,48 for the UK but only 0,02 for Italy, and the correlation between the frequency of phone calls and the distance to one own' parents is -0,12 for the UK and 0,16 for Italy. These figures Suggest that the association between distance and contacts is complex if all kinds of contacts are taken into consideration.

[Table 2 around here]

What accounts for a more frequent pattern of contacts to one's own parents, both face-to-face and by telephone, in the two countries? Is the type of union, cohabitation rather than a formal marriage, a significant determinant of such differences?

Results

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of a series of ordered multinomial models for Italy and the United Kingdom, respectively (log odds and standard errors are reported in the tables). For both countries, Model 1includes a series of controls for the educational level, the type of union, the duration of the (co-living) relationship, the age of the respondents and that of their parents, and the sex of each member of the dyad. First of all, the dyads variables show that in both countries daughters tend to visit their parents more frequently than sons, and more often their mothers than their fathers. This effect maintains across models and is stronger for telephone contacts (Model 5) than for visits, highlighting how a process of gendered habits as well as expectations (or gendered time availability) might be in place. In the United Kingdom, in particular, daughters' mothers are called or call by far the most frequently - substantially more than fathers and sons' parents.

At this stage, cohabiting rather than being married does seem to have a negative effect on the frequency of visits in both countries, but much more so in Italy than in the UK. Type of cohabitation (whether as a first partnership or after the end of a marriage) does not make any difference *per se,* whereas in both countries the age of the parent has a boosting effect on visits: the negative coefficient means that each further year of the parent makes it *less likely* to be found in a *lower* category of frequency of visits). Symmetrically, children's age has a depressing effect on visits (positive coefficient). As expected, both parental and children need (of which respectively parental older, and children younger age are a proxy) are predictors of the frequency of visits. Model 2 integrates measures of distance to the parents, which – in both countries - display the expected pattern: a lower frequency of visits for higher distances (linearly increasing effect). In Italy, this effect grows stronger with the distance (above 16 Km. distance, and even more so if the distance exceeds 50 km, parents and children are far more likely to visit each other only monthly or less frequently).

Distance seems also to account for much of the variability initially observed at both the individuals' and dyads' levels. In the fixed part of the model, we can observe how controlling for distance reduces dramatically the effect of cohabitation in Italy, and makes it insignificant for the UK. In particular, in Italy, after controlling for distance, the model reveals how the residual effect of cohabitation is confined mainly to a slightly

lower likelihood of visiting "daily" and a higher probability to "never" visit each other - an instance that concerns less than 1,5% of the sampled population. This finding lends itself to a not easy interpretation. On the one hand, it suggests that the biggest part of the lower frequency of visits by cohabiting individuals compared to married ones may be, especially in Italy, the consequence not of the kind of partnership but of residential circumstances. On the other hand, this finding shifts the research question concerning differences between cohabitant and married children from frequency of visits to choices concerning patterns of proximity. In order to empirically test the hypothesis that residential patterns are a way in which cohabiting children deal with the possible relational consequences of a behaviour which is still somewhat deviant from the norm, we would however need different data.

Contrary to our expectations, duration of the relationship does not seem to foster the frequency of visits, once controlled for the age of both children and parents.

Model 3 incorporates controls for the parental residential situation, for time availability (involvement in paid employment), for the frequency of phone calls and for the presence of other potential carers (siblings). In the fixed part, we can observe that, in both countries, parents living in "other circumstances" (rather than alone or in couple) receive fewer visits. Not a surprising result, since most of these arrangements comprise people residing in old age retirement homes, where their caring needs are attended to (maybe also as a result of the difficulty their children have in providing assistance). Less expected is the lower frequency of visits in the case of parents living alone, particularly in the UK.

After controlling for the remaining available predictors, we no longer find any difference between cohabitant and married couples in the UK with respect to the frequency of visits. In both countries, furthermore, we find a strong and positive interaction effect of cohabitation with the frequency of phone calls. It seems not only that children who phone more frequently will also display a higher rate of visits, but that this is more true for cohabitant than for married children. The combination of an increase in the negative effect of cohabitation with a positive interaction effect between phone calls and cohabitation in Italy suggests that there could be a difference between cohabitants who phone and visit their parents to a similar degree as the married ones and others whose

contacts are somewhat looser. In other words, phone calls are more a salient predictor of visits for cohabitant than for married individuals. This result offers some support to Dalla Zuanna, Barbagli and Castiglioni's (2003) observation that cohabiting couples' behaviour might be more strongly polarised, depending on the support received from their parents

The presence of siblings reduces the pressure to provide assistance to one's parents in both countries. In Italy, where it could be controlled, more the siblings' number than their presence matters, suggesting that care work is shared). Being employed has the expected negative effect in the UK, but surprisingly has no effect in Italy. Furthermore, Model 4 presents country specific results about the frequency of visits that do not allow a direct comparison, because they comprise those variables that we hypothesised could account for individuals' frequency of contact with their parents, but were not available in both datasets. We can see how, in the UK, working part-time reduces the negative effect on visits of being employed. (Reduced working hours might however also be endogenous, in that a shorter working schedule might have been chosen for attending to the caring needs of older parents. Contrary to our expectations, the presence of young children seems not to have an effect on both visits and phone calls in the UK and a rather weak one in Italy, and only for infants (Model 5). In the UK, poor health in the adult children generation diminishes the frequency of contacts. In Italy, when the poor health pertains to the parental generation, it lowers the probability to experience infrequent visits. Unfortunately, we have health information only for generation of children in the UK, for the parental generation in Italy. Thus we do not know whether this asymmetry is age/generational or country specific. Having incurred in financial difficulties generally hampers contacts. But having received financial support by parents increases them, suggesting that either financial support occurs within close relationships, or receiving financial support incentives visits, out of a feeling of reciprocity or of obligation (no such an effect is found for telephone calls in Model 5). Given the small n. it has not been possible to test whether there are differences in this between married and cohabitant children.

Finally, Model 5, reproduces Model 4, but predicting a different dependent variable: the frequency of telephone contacts. The type of union entered has no predictive effect in either country, but in both countries there is a higher association between phoning and

visiting among cohabitants than among married children. In Italy, parents living alone receive more frequent telephone calls . Higher educational levels reduce the frequency of phone calls, both for children and for parents, suggesting a higher capacity to develop or engage in alternative networks for emotional support. We can also observe how the parents' deteriorating health status in Italy (indicator not available for the UK), prompts a change in patterns of contacts complementary to that found for visits alone (see above, Model 4): from an increased frequency of phone calls when it is perceived as "fair" (as opposed to "good") to a reduced number of calls, but more frequent visits when it is perceived as "bad". Furthermore, whereas parents living in "other" arrangements (mostly in old people homes) receive much fewer telephone calls and visits in both countries, parents living "alone" tend on the contrary to receive more phone calls in Italy. In the UK, instead, they are polarized between those who show a higher probability to phone or to be phoned daily and those who phone or are phoned only monthly or less.

Discussion

Our data confirm that there are different patterns of contacts between generations in Italy and the UK, irrespective of the children's marital status. Italian children and their parents keep tighter contacts than in the UK (see Figure 1), through both visits and telephone calls. This is partly explained by the fact that Italian adult children generally live nearer to their parents than UK ones, a well-known crucial factor in the frequency of contacts (see Table 2). Against this background, our findings support the hypothesis that there are more differences in Italy than in the UK between cohabiting and married adult children in the frequency of contacts with their parents.

In both countries, contrary to our hypothesis, duration of cohabitation does not increase visits frequency, and thus cannot explain away differences between marital and non marital unions. What makes a real difference, instead, is distance, since distance is generally associated to fewer contacts, particularly, and obviously, face to face. Cohabitant children, particularly in Italy, tend to live farther away from their parents than married ones. Once controlled for distance, only in Italy a small amount of difference between cohabitant and married children is left: among the former, we found a lower likelihood to visit daily; and the quota of those who never have contact with their parents,

although minoritarian, is higher than among the latter, indirectly confirming the hypothesis of a polarization within cohabitant couples in Italy.

The wider average distance between parents' and children's households in Italy in case of cohabitation of the latter should however not be discounted as meaningless for our research question. With the data available, however, we can but make some informed hypothesis. First, it may be unrelated to cohabitation as such, but be the consequence of the high presence of cohabitants who have had a previous marriage history and are well into their adult life. Past work, marriage and family histories may have put a distance between parents and children's households well before the decision to cohabit. Second, in a context where cohabitation is (was) little legitimised and supported, it might be easier, both for the young and for those exiting from a marriage (or entering a partnership with a person who was not yet divorced) to live far away, in order to avoid reciprocal embarrassment and tensions within the kinship network, as well as community gossip. Particularly for the young, living in a different city because of study or job, weakens family and social control and may ease the decision to cohabit as a more or less temporary arrangement. Finally, parents are more willing to help buy an apartment – the main way through which a young couple accesses to a lodging in Italy - when children marry rather than cohabit. Children who choose to cohabit must therefore more often look for an apartment only based on their individual ability to avail themselves of – renting or buying - market opportunities, without being supported by their parents' resources, but also constrained by their preferences, including those concerning proximity. One or more of these reasons, and not simply that of a deterioration of child-parent relationships, may explain why children who cohabit live at a greater distance from their parents than married ones. What we wish to point out is that distance, particularly in Italy, is not a neutral choice with regard to intergenerational relationships. If it may be prompted and even forced because of labour market demands, its different distribution according to the couple's status suggests that something having to do with this status and its impact on intergenerational relationships is at play. At the same time, contrary to our hypothesis, the negative impact of cohabitation on contacts is very reduced. Even when living at a distance, cohabitant couples tends to keep as frequently in contact with their parents as married ones, at least via telephone. Once controlled for

distance, no difference is found between married and cohabitant couples in the UK and a very small one in Italy. The longer distance among cohabitants offers rather some indirect evidence for the polarization thesis.

With regard to our third hypothesis, concerning the positive impact of grandchildren, it is confirmed only for Italy and only for very young children, for both cohabitant and married couples. On the contrary, in both countries, the presence of siblings reduces the frequency of contacts: not only adult children take turns in visiting and phoning their parents, also parents divide their visits and their phone calls among their various children. Thus, from the perspective of parents, the overall frequency of contacts may increase if they have more than one child, but it decreases at the dyadic level, for both married and cohabitant children.

Also gender, of both children and of parents makes a difference. Daughters visit their parents more frequently than sons and mothers receive more visits than fathers. This happens among both married and cohabitant children (not shown, results available on request).

To conclude, our data do not offer substantive ground for the individualization thesis, according to which cohabiting instead of marrying weakens intergenerational relationships. They offer a very limited evidence for the diffusion thesis, in so far, to a limited degree, differences in frequency of contacts between cohabiting and married children and their parents are higher in Italy than in the UK, once controlled for distance. They also ffer some evidence for the polarization-within cohabitant couples thesis for Italy. Finally, an unforeseen result of our study is the different role played by distance in the residential choices of married and cohabitant couples in both countries. We suspect that this might be, at least partly, the result of different strategic choices with regard to the intensity of relationships and boundary setting with their parents. But in order to transform this suspicion in a testable hypothesis we would need different data. .

* A previous version of this paper was presented at the EQUALSOC conference held in Berlin, May 2008. We thank all those who offered helpful comments in that occasion. We are also grateful to Dr. Michael Biggs for his comments on an earlier version.

References

Albertini, M., and C. Saraceno (2008), "Contact between adult children and their divorced parents: Italy in a comparative perspective", in C. Saraceno (ed.), *Families, Ageing and Social Policy: Generational Solidarity in European Welfare States*, Edward Elgar, pp.

Amato, P. R. (2003), 'Reconciling Divergent Perspectives: Judith Wallerstein, Quantitative Family Research and Children of Divorce', *Family Relations,* **52** (4), 332–339.

Aquilino, W. S. (1994), 'Later Life Parental Divorce and Widowhood: Impact on Young Adults' Assessment of Parent-Child Relations', *Journal of Marriage and the Family,* **56** (4), 908–922.

Attias-Donfut, Claudine and François-Charles Wolff (2000), 'The redistributive effects of generational transfers', on: S. Arber and C. Attias-Donfut (eds), *The Myth of Generational Conflict,* London/New York: Routledge, pp. 22-46.

Barbagli M., Castiglioni M,, Dalla Zuanna (2003), *Fare famiglia in Italia*, Bologna, il Mulino

Barlow, A., Duncan, S., Evans, G., & Park, A. (2001), "Just a piece of paper? Marriage and cohabitation in Britain." in *British Social Attitudes 18th Report. Public Policy, Social Ties*, 2001–2002 edition, NCSR/Sage, pp. 29-57

Beck U. (1992), *Risk Society*,Oakland, Cal., Sage

Beck U. and E. Beck Gernsheim (2002), *Individualization*, Oakland, Cal., Sage

Bernardi, F., and T. Poggio (2004). Home ownership and social inequality in Italy, In K. Kurz & H.-P. Blossfeld (Eds.), *Homeownership and social inequality in comparative perspective*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 187–232

Blossfeld, H.-P., D. Manting and G. Rohwer (1993), "Patterns of change in family formation in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands: Some consequences for the solidarity between generations", in H.A. Becker and P.L.J. Hermkens (eds.) *Solidarity of Generations*, Amsterdam: Thesis Publishers, pp. 175-196.

Blossfeld H.-P.; Klijzing E. , M. Mills, and K. Kurz (eds) (2006), *Globalization, uncertainty and youth in society*, London, Routledge

Braun N., Engelhardt H. (2004). "Diffusion Processes and Event History Analysis". *Vienna Yearbook of Population Research 2004*.111-132.

Chiuri, M. C., & Jappelli, T. (2000). Financial markets imperfections and home ownership: A comparative study. Working Paper No. 44, Centro Studi in Economia Salerno.

Daatland S. O. (2007), "Marital History ad Intergenerational solidarity: The impact of divorce and unmarried cohabitation", in *Journal of Social Issues*, 63, 4, pp. 809-825.

Di Giulio P. and A. Rosina (2006), *Intergenerational family ties and the diffusion of cohabitation in Italy*, MPIDR working paper WP2006-038

Dykstra, P.A. (1997), 'The effects of divorce on intergenerational exchanges in families', Netherlands Journal of Social Sciences*,* **33**, 77–93

Eggebeen, D. (2005), "Cohabitation and exchange of support," in Social Forces, 83(3):1097-1110.

Ermisch, J. (2005), "The puzzling rise in childbearing outside marriage," in A. F. Heath, J. Ermisch, & D. Gallie (Eds.), *Understanding social change*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 23–53

Ermisch, J. and Francesconi (2000) "Cohabitation in Great Britain: not for long, but here to stay," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Series A, Vol. 163, pp. 153-171

Ermisch, J., and P. Di Salvo (1997) The economic determinants of young people's household formation, *Economica*, 64, pp. 627–644

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

Grundy, Emily (1999), 'Household and Family Change in Mid and Later Life in England and Wales', in Susan McRae, (ed.), *Changing Britain: Families and Households in the 1990s*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.201–228.

Gruppo di coordinamento per la demografia (2007), *Rapporto sulla popolazione. L'Italia all'inizio del XXI secolo*, Bologna, il Mulino

Harper, Sarah (2004), 'The challenge for families of demographic ageing', In S. Harper (ed.), Families in Ageing Societies. A Multi-Disciplinary Approach, Oxford. Oxford University Press pp. 6-30

Hetherington, E.M., and M.M. Stanley-Hagan (1997), 'The Effects of Divorce on Fathers and their Children', in Michael, Lamb (ed*.), The role of the father in child development*, New York: Wiley, pp. 191–211.

Höllinger, F., and M. Haller (1990), 'Kinship and social networks in modern societies: A cross-cultural comparison among seven nations', European Sociological Review*,* **6** (2), 103–124.

Journal of Family Issues (2007), two special issues on 'Multiple Meanings of Childlessness in Late Life—Findings for Seven Societies', vol. 28, nn.10,11

Kalmijn M. (2008), "The effects of separation and divorce on parent-child relationships in ten European countries". in C. Saraceno (ed.), *Families, Ageing and Social Policy: Generational Solidarity in European Welfare States*, Edgar Elgar, pp.

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

Kiernan, K. E. (2000), 'European perspectives on union formation', in Linda, G. Waite, Christine, Bachrach, Michelle, Hindin, Elizabeth,Thompson, and Arland, Thorton (eds), *Ties that bind: perspectives on marriage and cohabitation*, New York, Aldine de Gruyter, pp. 40-58

Kiernan, K. E. (2001). The rise of cohabitation and childbearing outside marriage in Europe. *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, 15(1), 1–21.

Kiernan, K. E. (2002). Cohabitation in Western Europe: Trends, issues and implications. In A. Booth & A. Crouter (Eds.), Just living together: Implications of cohabitation on families, children and social policy (pp. 3–31). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Kiernan, K. E. (2004). Redrawing the boundaries of marriage. *International Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 66, 980–987

Giddens A. (1992), *The transformation of intimacy*, Cambridge, Polity Press

Kohli M. and Albertini M. (2008), "The family as a source of support for adult children's own family projects: European varieties", in C. Saraceno (ed.), *Families, Ageing and Social Policy: Generational Solidarity in European Welfare States*, Edward Elgar, pp. .

Kohli, M. (1999), 'Private and Public Transfers between Generations', *European Societies*, 1, 1, pp. 103-122.

Kurz, K., & Blossfeld, H.-P. (Eds.) (2004), *Homeownership and social inequality in comparative perspective*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Lesthaeghe, R. and Meekers, D. (1986). Value changes and the dimensions of familialism in the European community. *European Journal of Population* 2, 225-268.

Mills, M. (2000), *The transformation of partnerships. Canada, The Netherlands, and the Russian Federation in the age of modernity*, Amsterdam: Thela Thesis Population Studies.

Nazio T. (2008), *Cohabitation, Family and Society*, London: Routledge

Nazio, T. and Blossfeld H.-P. (2003), The diffusion of cohabitation among young women in West Germany, East Germany and Italy, *European Journal of Population*, 19, pp. 47-82

Palloni, A. (2001). "Diffusion in Sociological Analysis" in J. B. Casterline (ed.) Diffusion Processes and Fertility Transition: Selected Perspectives, Washington, National Academy Press, pp. 66-114

Poggio, T. (2008) "The intergenerational transmission of home ownership and the reproduction of the familialistic welfare regime", in C. Saraceno (ed.) *Families, aging and social policies. Generational solidarity in the European welfare states*, Edward Elgar, pp.

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

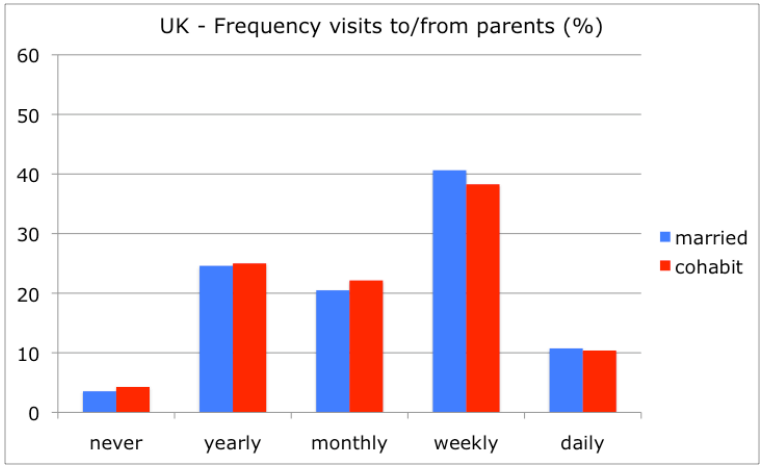
Rosina A., Fraboni R. (2004). "Is marriage losing its centrality in Italy?" *Demographic Research*, 11, pp. 149-172.

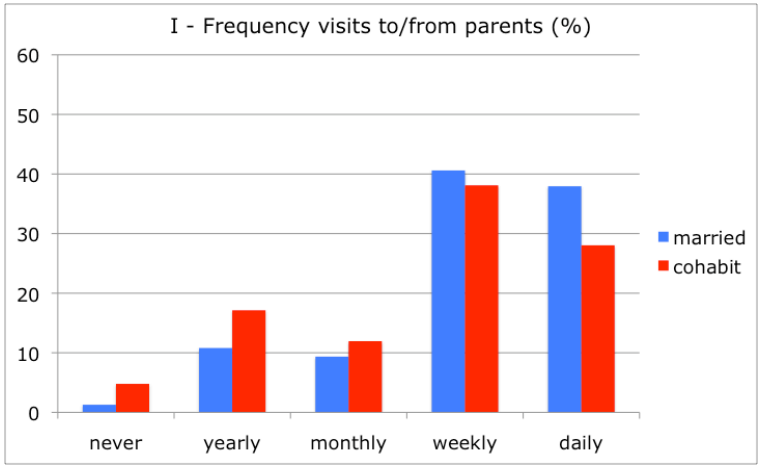
Steele, FA, Kallis, C & Joshi, H. (2006), 'The formation and outcomes of cohabiting and marital partnerships in early adulthood: the role of previous partnership experience', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A* (Statistics in Society), 169(4), pp. 757-779

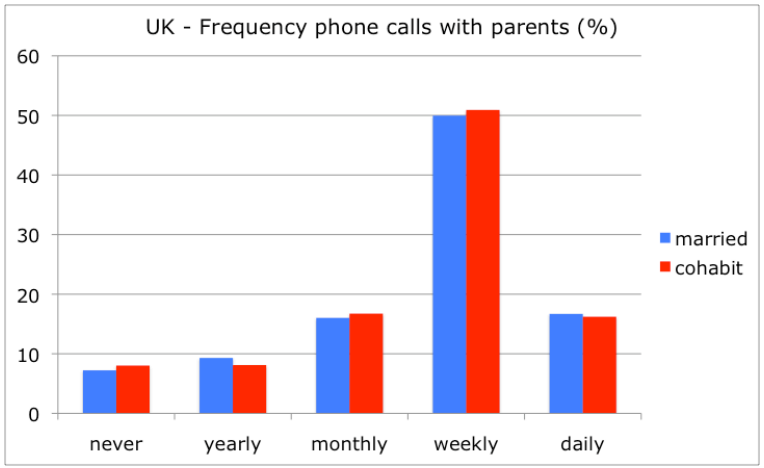
Steele, FA, Kallis, C, Goldstein, H & Joshi, H. (2005), 'The relationship between childbearing and transitions from marriage and cohabitation in Britain', *Demography*, 42(4), pp.647-673

Wu Z. (2000), *Cohabitation. An Alternative Form of Family Living*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Figure 1. Distribution of frequency visits and phone calls to/from one's own parent







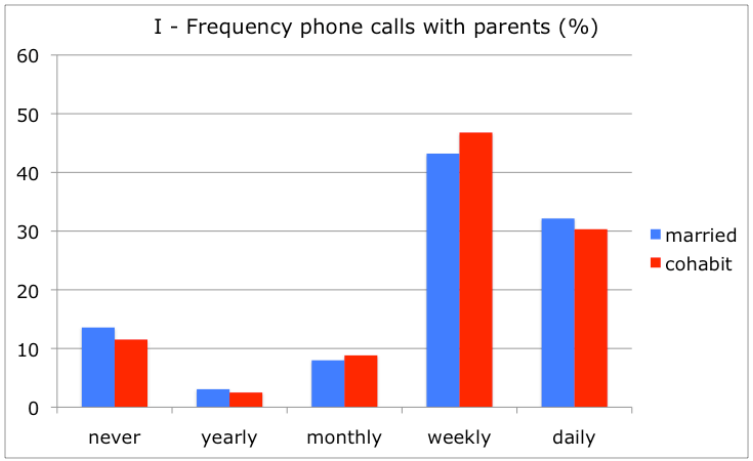


Table 2

	United Kingdom		Italy
Distance			
< 15 min.s	**41,0**	other flat same building	**11,5**
15-30 min.s	**20,5**	within 1 km.	**26,2**
30 min.s - 1 hour	11,2	same city	**23,8**
1-2 hours	9,7	other city <16 km.	**14,6**
> 2 hours	14,4	other city 16-50 km.	9,2
abroad	3,2	other city >50 km.	11,5
Total (N=5441)	100	abroad	3,2
		Total (N=21706)	100
Frequency of visits			
never	3,7	never	1,4
less often	7,3	sometimes /year	11,1
several times/year	17,4	sometimes /month	9,5
at least once/month	20,8	weekly	10,7
at least once/week	40,1	sometimes /week	29,9
daily	**10,7**	daily	**37,5**
Total (N=5496)	100	Total (N=21706)	100,0
Freq. of phone calls			
never	7,4	never	13,5
less often	3,8	sometimes /year	3,0
several times/year	5,2	sometimes /month	8,0
at least once/month	16,2	weekly	**8,9**
at least once/week	**50,2**	sometimes /week	**34,5**
daily	**16,6**	daily	**32,1**
Total (N=5496)	100	Total (N=21117)	100

ITALY	Model 1	SE	Model 2	SE	Model 3	SE	Model 4	SE	Model 5	SE
Response	**visit**		**visit**		**visit**		**visit**		**phone**	
Fixed part										
Constant [<=never]	-7.374	0.121	-7.265	0.143	-7.597	0.168	-7.534	0.169	-4.685	0.127
Constant [<=yearly]	-3.920	0.090	-5.753	0.104	-6.060	0.135	-5.997	0.137	-4.085	0.125
Constant [<=monthly]	-2.429	0.087	-4.000	0.087	-4.276	0.123	-4.212	0.125	-2.945	0.124
Constant[<=weekly]	1.006	0.086	0.294	0.080	0.063	0.116	0.129	0.119	0.471	0.122
Dyad: she-her father	0.252	0.048	0.308	0.051	0.331	0.052	0.331	0.052	0.450	0.049
Dyad: he-his mother	0.131	0.061	0.664	0.058	0.596	0.063	0.602	0.063	1.019	0.063
Dyad: he-his father	0.195	0.068	0.713	0.065	0.688	0.071	0.695	0.071	1.195	0.069
Parent educational level (centred)	-0.076	0.022	-0.008	0.021	-0.032	0.021	-0.032	0.021	0.113	0.022
Educational level (centred)	0.034	0.022	0.045	0.020	-0.025	0.021	-0.026	0.021	0.221	0.022
Cohabits [<=never]	1.956	0.270	1.291	0.237	1.195	0.262	1.164	0.263	0.221	0.221
Cohabits [<=yearly]	1.307	0.182	0.359	0.190	0.415	0.212	0.391	0.213	0.060	0.212
Cohabits [<=monthly]	1.178	0.168	0.293	0.172	0.469	0.196	0.456	0.196	0.162	0.194
Cohabits [<=weekly]	0.945	0.173	0.231	0.162	0.405	0.182	0.395	0.182	0.242	0.184
Cohabits (after marriage)					0.146	0.257	0.153	0.257	-0.209	0.274
Duration union (years)	0.003	0.006	0.020	0.006	0.019	0.006	0.016	0.006	0.010	0.006
Parent age (centred)	-0.021	0.005	-0.018	0.004	-0.027	0.004	-0.026	0.004	0.005	0.004
Child age (centred)	0.029	0.008	0.006	0.007	0.012	0.007	0.012	0.007	-0.013	0.008
Distance (centred)[<=never]			0.928	0.121	0.873	0.123	0.873	0.124	-1.522	0.037
Distance (centred)[<=yearly]			0.946	0.078	0.918	0.078	0.918	0.078	-1.417	0.035
Distance (centred)[<=monthly]			1.187	0.053	1.207	0.053	1.208	0.053	-1.111	0.034
Distance (centred)[<=weekly]			1.427	0.034	1.498	0.035	1.499	0.035	-0.675	0.034
Distance (16-50 Km.)[<=never]			-1.370	0.370	-1.301	0.379	-1.307	0.379		
Distance (16-50 Km.)[<=yearly]			-0.748	0.218	-0.699	0.221	-0.703	0.221		
Distance (16-50 Km.)[<=monthly]			0.230	0.142	0.219	0.143	0.217	0.143		
Distance (16-50 Km.)[<=weekly]			-0.059	0.154	-0.176	0.155	-0.176	0.155		
Distance (>50 Km.)[<=never]			-0.483	0.431	-0.428	0.443	-0.420	0.444		
Distance (>50 Km.)[<=yearly]			3.208	0.262	3.252	0.265	3.261	0.265		
Distance (>50 Km.)[<=monthly]			3.229	0.196	3.145	0.197	3.147	0.197		
Distance (>50 Km.)[<=weekly]			0.510	0.218	0.263	0.222	0.261	0.222		
Distance (16-50 Km.)									1.280	0.116
Distance (>50 Km.)									2.474	0.137

Parent lives couple with child(ren)					0.004	0.068	0.007	0.068	0.025	0.070
Parent lives alone					0.129	0.071	0.129	0.071	-0.121	0.072
Parent lives alone with child(ren)					0.330	0.088	0.326	0.088	0.022	0.089
Parent lives other					0.892	0.216	0.908	0.216	2.625	0.219
Frequency phone calls (centred)					-0.142	0.016	-0.140	0.016	x	
Cohabit * Freq. phone calls (centr.)					-0.350	0.071	-0.352	0.071	x	
Freq. visits (centred)[<=never]					x		x		x	
Freq. visits (centred)[<=yearly]					x		x		x	
Freq. visits (centred)[<=monthly]					x		x		x	
Freq. visits (centred)[<=weekly]					x		x		x	
Freq. visits (centred)					x		x		-0.703	0.037
Cohabit * Freq. visits (centr.)					x		x		-0.416	0.102
Works					-0.037	0.062	-0.049	0.063	-0.053	0.064
Siblings (yes)					0.059	0.088	0.062	0.088	-0.020	0.089
Number of siblings					0.145	0.016	0.143	0.016	0.097	0.017
Has child(ren) 0-2 years (yes)							-0.242	0.080	-0.229	0.086
Ever needed economic aid							0.333	0.105	0.032	0.108
Received econ. aid from parents							-0.506	0.140	-0.170	0.145
Parent’s poor health (bad)					-0.345	0.095	-0.347	0.095	0.206	0.091
Parent’s poor health (fair)					-0.046	0.087	-0.046	0.087	-0.154	0.086
Random Part										
couple level - σ2 variance	1.973	0.143	1.218	0.114	1.159	0.114	1.166	0.114	1.963	0.123
children level - σ2 variance	5.369	0.158	3.159	0.130	3.217	0.132	3.202	0.132	3.800	0.130
Units: couples	8163		8163		8163		8163		8163	
Units: children	13503		13503		13503		13503		13503	
Units: dyads	21117		21117		21117		21117		21117	
Units: resp_indicator	84468		84468		84468		84468		84468	

UNITED KINGDOM	Model 1	SE	Model 2	SE	Model 3	SE	Model 4	SE	Model 5	SE
Response	**visit**		**visit**		**visit**		**visit**		**phone**	
Fixed part										
Constant [<=never]	-5.718	0.141	-5.130	0.150	-6.769	0.285	-6.830	0.300	-6.470	0.232
Constant [<=yearly]	-2.446	0.104	-3.079	0.123	-3.807	0.217	-3.863	0.235	-4.959	0.210
Constant [<=monthly]	-0.732	0.100	-0.870	0.113	-0.819	0.204	-0.866	0.223	-3.238	0.201
Constant[<=weekly]	2.730	0.109	3.302	0.154	3.945	0.231	3.909	0.248	0.739	0.196
Dyad: she-her father	0.654	0.083	0.680	0.089	0.158	0.096	0.158	0.096	1.276	0.088
Dyad: he-his mother	0.835	0.103	1.143	0.101	0.648	0.109	0.507	0.118	1.291	0.105
Dyad: he-his father	1.080	0.110	1.439	0.109	0.670	0.119	0.531	0.127	1.794	0.113
Educational level (centred)	-0.131	0.016	0.010	0.015	-0.026	0.016	-0.026	0.016	0.037	0.014
Cohabits [<=never]	0.560	0.253	0.206	0.224	-0.147	0.277	-0.164	0.280	-0.302	0.248
Cohabits [<=yearly]	0.316	0.173	0.096	0.165	0.125	0.182	0.104	0.185	-0.416	0.205
Cohabits [<=monthly]	0.344	0.168	0.040	0.155	0.247	0.174	0.223	0.178	-0.224	0.174
Cohabits [<=weekly]	0.181	0.207	-0.197	0.190	0.237	0.223	0.213	0.225	-0.020	0.166
Cohabits (after marriage)	-0.470	0.232	-0.167	0.206	-0.296	0.213	-0.286	0.215	0.183	0.193
Duration union (years)	-0.020	0.007	-0.009	0.006	-0.008	0.007	-0.007	0.007	0.003	0.006
Parent age (centred)	-0.030	0.008	-0.039	0.008	-0.032	0.008	-0.031	0.008	-0.008	0.007
Child age (centred)	0.075	0.011	0.044	0.010	0.030	0.011	0.030	0.011	0.023	0.010
Distance (centred)[<=never]			0.421	0.105	0.248	0.114	0.255	0.114	-0.585	0.095
Distance (centred)[<=yearly]			1.600	0.099	1.644	0.105	1.653	0.106	-0.326	0.088
Distance (centred)[<=monthly]			2.068	0.097	1.997	0.103	2.005	0.103	-0.198	0.086
Distance (centred)[<=weekly]			2.319	0.146	2.191	0.150	2.199	0.150	0.020	0.090
Distance (1/2 hrs. – 2 hrs.)			-0.849	0.210	-0.479	0.219	-0.489	0.219	-0.752	0.195
Distance (>2 hrs.)			-0.128	0.372	0.355	0.390	0.334	0.390	-0.888	0.327
Parent lives alone [<=never]					1.428	0.287	1.424	0.287	0.721	0.200
Parent lives alone [<=yearly]					0.897	0.160	0.902	0.160	0.341	0.147
Parent lives alone [<=monthly]					0.300	0.142	0.300	0.142	-0.113	0.120
Parent lives alone [<=weekly]					-0.441	0.169	-0.438	0.169	-0.679	0.132
Parent lives other [<=never]					1.868	0.252	1.864	0.253	1.446	0.177
Parent lives other [<=yearly]					1.373	0.159	1.367	0.159	1.295	0.135
Parent lives other [<=monthly]					0.411	0.151	0.404	0.151	0.723	0.120
Parent lives other [<=weekly]					-0.205	0.210	-0.219	0.210	0.007	0.161
Frequency phone calls (centred)					-0.904	0.037	-0.905	0.037	x	

Cohabit * Freq. phone calls (centr.)					-0.297	0.079	-0.303	0.079	x	
Freq. visits (centred)					x		x		-1.652	0.058
Cohabit * Freq. visits (centr.)					x		x		-0.183	0.099
Works					0.275	0.122	0.482	0.134	-0.124	0.119
Part-time							-0.424	0.135	0.166	0.120
Siblings (yes)					0.364	0.141	0.357	0.141	0.297	0.127
Has young children (yes)							0.012	0.101	0.001	0.091
Child’s poor health (bad)							0.556	0.198	-0.131	0.176
Housing tenure (rent)							-0.076	0.114	0.044	0.102
Random Part										
couple level - σ2 variance	1.007	0.200	0.305	0.159	0.163	0.170	0.158	0.170	0.353	0.134
children level - σ2 variance	4.038	0.237	2.698	0.205	2.930	0.224	2.927	0.224	1.998	0.169
Units: couples	1970		1970		1970		1970		1965	
Units: children	3389		3389		3389		3389		3372	
Units: dyads	5496		5496		5496		5496		5459	
Units: resp_indicator	21984		21984		21984		21984		21836	