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Analysis of determinants and prevalence of LAT

Dimitri Mortelmans, Inge Pasteels, Arnaud Régnier-Loilier, Daniele Vignoli, and Stefano Mazzuco

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Abstract:
One of the non-standard family forms that emerges and recently became more visible, both in society and in science is a "non-residential partnership", well-known as Living Apart Together or briefly "LAT". Despite the growing visibility of this new family form, determining the statistical incidence of LAT is complex for two main reasons. First, LAT partnerships are not registered in any official statistics. Second, a generally accepted definition of LAT is absent. In this deliverable, we collect several studies that gives an overview of the prevalence and the determinants of LAT in Europe.

Keywords: Family forms, Living Apart Together, Non-residential partnership, Life course, Europe

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1 Analysis of determinants and prevalence of new family forms: Living Apart Together (LAT)

By Inge Pasteels, Dimitri Mortelmans, and Vicky Lyssens-Danneboom
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The increased variability in family types and relationship forms is the most visible outcome of family change in the past decades in Europe. This family change is part of the Second Demographic Transition that is characterized by a profound transformation in patterns of nuptiality and fertility, including a marked postponement of relationship formation and parenthood, a retreat from marriage in favour of unmarried cohabitation, a rise in divorce and separation rates, as well as of out-of-wedlock childbearing, and an increasing replacement of re-marriage by post-marital cohabitation, LAT-relationships or trusted friendships (Lesthaeghe and Neels 2002).

One of the non-standard family forms that emerges and recently became more visible, both in society and in science (Schneider 1996, Haskey 2005, Castro-Martín, Domínguez-Folgueras et al. 2008, Regnier-Loilier, Beaujouan et al. 2009, Strohm 2009) is a "non-residential partnership", well-known as Living Apart Together or briefly "LAT". Levin (2004) defines a LAT relationship as "a couple that does not share a home. Each of the two partners lives in his or her own home, possibly with other people. They define themselves as a couple and they perceive that their close surrounding personal network does so as well." These relationships, which may involve same-sex or opposite-sex partners, are characterized by social and emotional bonds that are potentially sexual and that Levin (2004) defines as "marriage-like" relationships (Bawin-Legros and Gauthier 2001; Haskey 2005; de Jong Gierveld and Latten 2008).

In previous work, Lyssens-Danneboom (2014, p. 8) summarizes several explanations as to why non-residential partnerships are becoming increasingly visible. "First, due to the reduction in mortality and increase in life expectancy, divorce has replaced death as main cause of marriage dissolution (Levin 2004). With higher numbers of divorcees, re-partnering has become more and more common (de Jong Gierveld 2002, de Jong Gierveld and Latten 2008),increasingly resulting in LAT-relationships. Advancements in transportation and IT communication also increase the likelihood of people falling in love with someone living further away. Due to the availability of technologies such as instant messaging and Skype

(Levin and Trost 1999, Kim 2001, Levin 2004, Cullen 2007), non-residential partnerships will also have a higher chance of surviving. Other factors that heighten the incidence of LAT-relationships include an increased emphasis on individualism and self-fulfillment as well as the availability of social subsidies or income transfers supporting lower income individuals who do not live with a partner."

Despite the growing visibility of this new family form, determining the statistical incidence of LAT is complex for two main reasons. First, LAT partnerships are not registered in any official statistics (Borell and Ghazanfareeon Karlsson 2003). Second, a generally accepted definition of LAT is absent. Moreover, from a scientific point of view, there is little comparative research dealing with LAT relationships in Europe. Thus, one needs to gain insight into the different types of LAT relationships and their spread across cohorts in Europe. New international comparative data such as GGS will allow studying the characteristics and individual determinants of LAT couples throughout Europe (Pailhé et al. 2013).

This deliverable focuses on this research gap and elaborates on the prevalence and meaning of LAT-relationships. It is part of the second objective and the fifth task (D2.4) of Work Package 2 of FamiliesandSocieties to focus on non-standard families in general and LAT-relationships in particular across Europe and across cohorts. The four studies that comprise this deliverable contribute to the literature about "Living Apart Together" in several ways.

The first study "Defining and measuring the prevalence of LAT relationships in multi-purpose surveys. Identifying LAT relationships in Europe using the Gender and Generations Survey" by Inge Pasteels, Vicky Lyssens-Danneboom and Dimitri Mortelmans explores the meaning and incidence of non-residential partnerships across Europe. This study reveals a widely applicable classification of LAT-relationships. By making no assumptions about the definition of a LAT-relationship, a data driven approach to gain insight into relationships between non-residential partners is chosen. Comparability between countries is obtained by using the harmonized GGS-data for different European countries so that differences in meaning and prevalence of LAT-relationships across Europe can be described. This study will help us to define more clearly the meaning of Living Apart Together and gives new insights on measuring this concept empirically in surveys.

The aim of the second study "Neither single nor in a couple in France: what became of them three and six years later?" by Arnaud Régnier-Loilier explores what has become of "young people", "single parents", "non-family individuals" and "seniors", being four categories of a typology of people in LAT-relationships, three and six years later. Are they

still in their non-cohabiting relationship with the same partner, have they moved in together or have they separated? This study answers the question whether non-residential partnership can be interpreted as the expression of a form of individualism or that it corresponds to a form of continuity, representing a step towards cohabitation? Results show that non-cohabiting relationships were short-lived overall. However, the proportions of transitions to cohabitation with the same partner, to a new relationship or to living alone do clearly differentiate the four groups of the typology.

The third study "Similar incidence, different nature? Characteristics of LAT-relationships in France and Italy" by Arnaud Régnier-Loilier and Daniele Vignoli contributes to the literature on the prevalence and determinants of Living Apart Together by focusing on two contrasting family settings such as France and Italy. Using data from the "Étude des relations familiales and Intergénérationelles" survey (ERFI) and the Household Multipurpose Survey "Famiglia e soggetti sociali", the probability of being in LAT versus in a co-resident relationship is analyzed for both countries. Conclusions are interpreted in light of the dominant narratives on the diffusion of new family patterns. Authors show that in Italy, LAT relationships are popular in the early phases of the life course when young adults are facing typical economic or cultural characteristics of society that restrict their choices, while in France, LAT relationships are more the result of a conscious choice, especially in the older phases of the life course.

The last study "Is the diffusion of cohabitation a precondition for the emergence of LAT?" by Stefano Mazzuco, Arnaud Régnier-Loilier and Daniele Vignoli shed light on the prevalence of LAT in relation to other "new" family patterns across European societies. The question whether the spread of "new" family arrangements, such as cohabitation, can be considered as a prerequisite for the emergence of LAT relationships is considered in this study. This descripted study suggests that LAT-relationships occur both in settings in which cohabitation is institutionalized, as well as in settings where cohabitation is relatively uncommon. So high levels of cohabitation do not necessarily appear as a prerequisite for the occurrence of LAT unions, but when cohabitation is not yet diffused and institutionalized, LAT couples experience this form of union at younger ages, and often as a result of a constraint.

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2 Defining and measuring the prevalence of LAT relationships in multi-purpose surveys. Identifying LAT relationships in Europe using the Gender and Generations Survey

By Inge Pasteels, Vicky Lyssens-Danneboom, and Dimitri Mortelmans
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2.1 Introduction

Having a regular non-residential partner, or 'Living Apart Together', is a type of relationship we find in all countries of the industrialized world (Haskey 2005; Schneider 1996; Strohm 2009; Castro-Martín et al. 2008). Though LAT relationships are increasingly seen as a valid lifestyle choice, they are still far from being a generally recognised or an accepted social institution, a reality mirrored in the absence of legal recognition and regulation. Unlike cohabiting couples, who have gradually been granted a number of legal rights comparable to those enjoyed by married couples (Skinner 2002), no legal structures exist to support partners in a LAT arrangement. LAT partnerships' existence within a legal vacuum clearly illustrates policy and law makers' marriage-centric approach to emerging partnership types (Barlow and James 2004). As Cherlin (1978) argued in the seventies about remarriage and cohabitation, LAT relations can analogously be called an "incomplete institution". As such, it corresponds with the concepts of individualization (Bauman 2002) and detraditionalization (Giddens 1992) characterizing the restructuring of family life in the Second Demographic Transition.

The growing visibility and acceptance of LAT unions (Castro-Martín et al. 2008; Duncan and Phillips 2010; Strohm 2009) has motivated researchers to estimate its prevalence and investigate its meaning and position within the life course compared to singlehood, cohabitation and marriage (Haskey 2005; Irene Levin and Jan Trost 1999; Roseneil 2006; Haskey and Lewis 2006). This has proven to be a complex task, as official statistics do not include individuals engaging in non-residential partnerships (Borell and Ghazanfareeon Karlsson 2003). In addition, the concept of LAT is subject to varying theoretical interpretations and definitions (Haskey 2005).

As a consequence, the prevalence rates for different countries found in the literature are rather ambiguous and hardly comparable given this lack of a formal or generally accepted definition. In UK (Haskey 2005), France (Regnier-Loilier et al. 2009), Germany (Schneider 1996), The Netherlands (De Graaf and Loozen 2004), Belgium (Lodewijckx and Deboosere

2011) and Sweden (Ghazanfareeon Karlsson and Borell 2005; Irene Levin and Jan Trost 1999) around 10% of all people has a non-residential partner, while between 6 and 9 % of people living in Australia (Reimondos et al. 2011), Canada (Milan and Peters 2003) or US (Strohm 2009) has a relationship with a non-cohabiting partner. But again, each country uses own definitions and moreover, results show that percentages can decrease by half if the definition of LAT relationships is restricted to only the "committed" LAT partnerships. E.g. for Belgium the incidence rate of LAT relationships decreases from 9,6% to 4,8 % if only people in a committed LAT partnership are included and those in a dating LAT relationship are excluded out of the calculations (for Belgium: Lodewijckx and Deboosere 2011).

The main goal of this study is exploring the meaning and incidence of non-residential partnership across Europe so that a widely applicable classification of LAT relationships can be revealed. The added value of this study is twofold. By making no assumptions about the definition of a LAT relationship, we apply a really "data driven" exploration of relationships between non-residential partners. Furthermore, comparability between countries is obtained by using harmonized data for different European countries so that differences and equivalences in the meaning and incidence of non-residential partnership across Europe can be described. This study will help us to define more clearly the meaning of Living Apart Together and gives new insights on measuring this concept empirically in surveys.

2.2 Literature

2.2.1 Non-empirical definitions of LAT

We start our research by sketching the various definitions that have been proposed to describe a LAT relationship. The very first to define Living Apart Together were the Scandinavian authors Levin and Trost (1999). They defined a LAT as 'a couple which does not share the same household; both of them live in their own households, in which other persons might also live; they define themselves as a couple; and they perceive that their dose social network also does so.' (Irene Levin and Jan Trost 1999).

Later, Levin (2004) further distinguished a LAT relationship as either voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary LAT partners made a deliberate choice for living apart from their partners. Involuntary LAT partners, on the other hand, would like to live together, but are prevented from doing so, mainly due to practical obstacles, such as the care for resident children or jobs in too far away places (Levin 2004). Roseneil (2006) added a third type to Levin's dichotomy: the undecided LAT partners (Regnier-Loilier et al. 2009).

The first theoretical dimensions discerned, concerned the stability and choice of the partner for this type of relationship. A second discussion that arose was directed to the scope in the life course where LAT partnerships can be found. A first group of researchers (Haskey 2005) employs a restrictive definition of LAT (Ghazanfareeon Karlsson and Borell 2002; Haskey 2005; Milan and Peters 2003; Roseneil 2006), considering only those who have their own households to be real LAT partners. This approach is based upon the assumption that only those living in their own households are in a position to make true relationship choices, the majority of whom are divorced or widowed (de Jong Gierveld and Latten 2008; Regnier-Loilier et al. 2009). Those still living at their parents' home have no other choice than to live separately from their partners.

A second group of researchers promotes a broader definition of LAT encompassing the whole life course. These authors include all non-residential partnerships, even those of whom the partners are still living at the parental home (Castro-Martín, Domínguez-Folgueras, & Martín-García, 2008; Strohm, Seltzer, Cochran & Mays, 2009). They consider it arguable as to whether those living with their parents should be excluded, as not all of those are young and dependent from their parents. Children remain longer in the parental home than was previously the case, and many alternate between periods of living at home and of living independently. An example of children that live in the parental home without any financial dependency are boomerang children, referring to adult children who return their parental home after experiencing a union dissolution. As a consequence, children living with their parents may just as independently make relationship choices as those having their own households. Authors employing a broad approach, describe LAT mainly as a stage in the courtship process, largely similar to dating. The individuals engaged in these partnerships are young, often enrolled in schooling and plan to cohabit with their partners, as soon as they are ready or have the means to set up an independent household (Teresa Castro-Martín; Marta Domínguez-Folgueras & Teresa Martín-García (2008); Milan & Peters 2003; Regnier-Loilier, Beaujouan, & Villeneuve-Gokalp, 2009; Strohm, Seltzer, Cochran, & Mays, 2009). Bernardi (2009) introduces the term 'LATAP (Living Apart Together at Parents' home), referring to the southern European version of living apart together in which young adults aged 20-30 form steady couple relationships while co-residing with their parents. In Spain, employing data from the 1999 Fertility Survey on a nationally representative sample of 7,740 women aged 15-49, Castro-Martín et al. (2008) found the prevalence of LAT relationships sharply diminishing after the age of 30. The young age profile of LAT partnerships suggests

that, in Spain, likewise in Italy, LAT partnerships are mainly viewed as a prelude rather than an alternative to marriage or cohabitation.

Duncan and Philips (2010) tried to resolve the discussion on the extent of the definition by distinguishing between 'dating LATs' and 'partner LATs', based on respondents' reasons for living apart from their partners, and the nature and frequency of the couple's social activities, such as seeing friends and relatives, spending weekends together and going on holidays. What distinguishes dating LATs from partner LAT is that the former live apart because it is 'too early' in the relationship or because they are 'not ready' to cohabit. Ermisch (2009) reserved the term 'committed LAT' for non-cohabiting couples who have been together for more than six months, whilst Castro-Martin and colleagues (2008) focused only on LAT relationships lasting more than two years. In Germany, Schneider (1996) surveyed more than 10 000 people aged 18-61, only focusing on non-residential partnerships that had lasted for at least one year.

2.2.2 Defining LAT in surveys

While the definition of Levin and Trost (2004; 1999) is appropriate for identifying LAT partnerships within a context of qualitative research, it is far less applicable within the context of quantitative studies. Large-scale surveys require standard form of questions. Currently, no such a question –without containing the word LAT itself - to identify LAT exists (Haskey 2005). Several studies have used a single-question approach to measure the prevalence of LAT. In Great Britain, in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Omnibus Survey (OMN), the purpose of identifying and estimating Living Apart Together was established by using the question '*Do you currently have a regular partner?*'. This question was addressed only to respondents aged 16 to 59 who were not married or co-residentially cohabiting (Haskey 2005). In Sweden, survey data on LAT were collected on three different occasions (1993, 1998 and 2001) employing the question: '*Do you live in a marriage-like relationship with someone while maintaining separate homes?*' (Levin 2004). In Australia, the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey (HILDA) asked respondents who were not married or cohabitating: "*Are you currently in an intimate ongoing relationship with someone you are not living with?*". In the Canadian 2001 General Social Survey (Milan and Peters 2003) respondents were asked a nearly similar question: '*Are you in an intimate relationship with someone who lives in a separate household*.'

All studies using a single-question approach to estimate the prevalence of LAT are confronted with the same definitional problem: whether, and if so, how to distinguish casual, dating relationships from committed LAT partnerships? The correct theoretical conclusion that LAT partnerships are a heterogeneous category, experienced by individuals at all stages of the life course is not sufficient to grasp an idea of LAT in our late-modern societies. In order to accurately categorize different types of partnerships, and the characteristics of the individuals involved, a single question no longer suffices. Instead, additional information on those engaged in LAT partnerships is needed, among which the frequency and duration of the partners' contact, the distance between their homes, their attitudes, commitment, daily relationship practices and future intentions. These aspects of LAT have already been investigated, though solely in small-scale qualitative studies, often comprising specific categories of LAT individuals, for instance, those of older age (de Jong Gierveld 2004b; Ghazanfareeon Karlsson and Borell 2002; Haskey and Lewis 2006). It is this shortcoming which we aim to resolve in this article by using a multi-country, data-driven approach.

As upon today, only few quantitative studies have addressed these issues. Using data from the French version of the GGS, Regnier-Loilier et al. (2009) described four main categories of living apart relationships, almost entirely determined by age and the presence or absence in the home of children born prior to the union. The group of 'Young adults' comprised solely respondents under 25 years old, without children, of which 99% was single and had never lived as a couple before. Three out of four respondents in this group were students. The second "Out of a family" group comprised respondents aged between 25 and 54, who were financially independent and did not (yet) have or live with any children. More than three-quarters were single and 14% were divorced. The third group of 'single parents" families was largely female, aged 25 to 54, often divorced, with (small) children in the house. The fourth group of 'Seniors' included all respondents aged 55 and over, often pensioned, with grown-up children. The authors found that, among individuals in a LAT relationship, 42% were Young adults, 35% were Out of a family, 14% Seniors and 9% Single parents. In Australia, Reimondos et al. (2011) conducted a comparable analysis, employing data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey (HILDA, 2005). In addition to the question whether they had a non-residential partners, respondents were asked about the starting date of their relationship, the distance between the partners' homes, the frequency of contact, whether and by whom a definite decision to live apart had been made, and the partners' future intentions. Using a correspondence Analysis (MCA) and cluster analysis, the authors identified a typology of groups of non-residential respondents with demographic

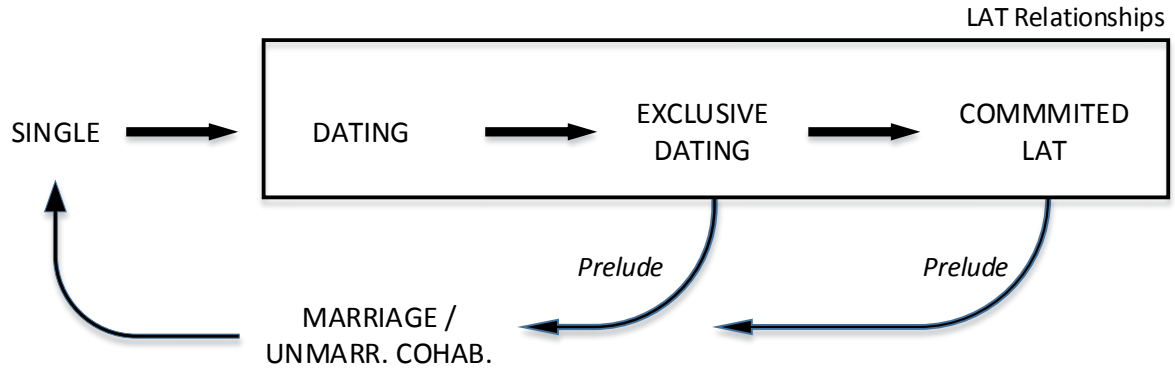
characteristics, largely similar to those identified by Beaujouan et al. (2009) in France. A first group comprises those aged 18-24 years, with no marital or cohabitation experience. A second group is aged 25-44, predominantly female with resident children, and a third group consists of non-residential partners aged 45 and over, previously married with non-resident children. Over 70 per cent of those older non-residential partners, most of whom were widowed or divorced, had made a positive decision to live apart, compared to fewer than half of the respondents age under 25. In addition, 79 per cent of the young adults had intentions to cohabit, compared to 32 per cent among the older group. The single parents closely resembled the older non-residential respondents in their decision to live apart and their future cohabitation plans.

2.3 Research question

Overall, it seems that a LAT partnership can be considered as a multi-stage or even multi-faced phenomenon in a broader partnership continuum going from (1) dating and (2) dating exclusively, over (3) a committed relationship LAT (with intentions of starting living together or not) till (4) unmarried cohabitation (with intentions of marriage or not) and finally, (5) marriage. Dating LAT relations are relations of type (1) and (2) and rather considered as a prelude in order to move further on the continuum to a cohabiting union, while LAT relations of type (3) are considered as a committed partnership in which both partners do not have any intention to shift to a cohabitation or marriage. Although, such relationship can be an intermittent relationship form as well and becoming a prelude for unmarried (4) or married (5) cohabiting unions. We underline that this continuum cannot be considered as unidirectional since people can go through some stages of this partnership continuum more than once during the life course and/or skip other stages.

Figure 1 shows the partnership continuum from a life course perspective.

Figure 1 Partnership continuum from a life course perspective



Widening pre-defined LAT relationships to non-residential partnerships and measuring it as a multi-faceted phenomenon corresponding to different moments in the life course is the scope of this study. We explore all non-residential partnerships without making any assumptions about LAT relationships in advance and try to classify them in different categories that fits into a partnership continuum characterized by a life course perspective. By analyzing LAT relationships in a data-driven way, the indicators that are meaningful to distinguish first from higher order partnerships and to differentiate between non-residential partnerships being either a prelude, or considered as an alternative, will be revealed. By presenting a set of indicators that can measure exhaustively and parsimoniously the incidence of all varying types of LAT relationships in different countries, we'll tackle the urgent question how to measure adequately LAT relationships in survey research.

2.4 Data and measures

We use the Generations and Gender Programme Wave 1 data version 4.2. The Generations and Gender Programme provides a set of national Generations and Gender Surveys (GGS) with accompanying contextual databases. The surveys can be well compared cross-nationally because national panel surveys followed similar sampling, interview techniques and follow-up rules. The data has currently been made available for 16 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia. Two countries, Germany and Austria were skipped for this comparative study due to validation problems or a deviant sampling design. Country has been considered as the stratification variable in the analysis in order to compare between countries across Europe.

We started our data-driven analysis by listing all variables that could be considered as relevant determinants for a classification of LAT relationships, referring to the literature and empirical studies mentioned above. Table 1 shows all indicators that could make sense and their corresponding availability for different GGS-countries.

Table 1. Indicators measuring LAT relationships

Indicator	Author / Survey	GGS-variable	Not available for:
Having a non-residential partner	Office for National Statistics Omnibus Survey, Great Britain Haskey (2005) Sweden (Levin 2004) Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Australia (Reimondos et al. 2011) Canadian General Social Survey, 2001 Milan and Peters (2003)	A311	Czech Republic
Deliberate choice – Reasons for living apart – Constrained by circumstances	Levin (2004), Duncan and Phillips (2010), Reimondos et al. (2011), Irene Levin and Jan Trost (1999), Roseneil (2006)	A312a-A312d	Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland (partially available), Russia (partially available)
Living independently from parents	Ghazanfareeon Karlsson and Borell (2002), Haskey (2005), Milan and Peters (2003), Roseneil (2006), Bernardi (2009), Castro-Martín et al. (2008)	A501	Poland
Age	Regnier-Loilier et al. (2009)	Ahg5_1	
Never lived as a couple before	Regnier-Loilier et al. (2009)	A333	
Children in the household	Regnier-Loilier et al. (2009), Levin (2004)	Ahg3_2-Ahg3_17	
Intention to cohabit in the future	Reimondos et al. (2011), Haskey (2005)	A327 and A332	Italy
Duration of the relationship	Reimondos et al. (2011), Ermisch, 2009, Castro-Martín et al. (2008)	A311	Hungary, Poland
Frequency of contacts	Reimondos et al. (2011)	A325	Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands
Distance	Haskey and Lewis (2006) Reimondos et al. (2011)	A324	Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland
Being financially independent	Regnier-Loilier et al. (2009)	A801	
Social activities or daily practices	Duncan and Phillips (2010), de Jong Gierveld (2004a), Ghazanfareeon Karlsson and Borell (2002), Haskey and Lewis (2006), Irene Levin and Jan Trost (1999)	Not available	

The core variable under consideration was having a partner with someone the respondent does not live with. We will refer to this kind of partnership as "non-residential partnership". The harmonized question in the Generations and Gender-survey is: "*Are you currently having an intimate (couple) relationship with someone you're not living with? This*

may also be your spouse if he/she does not live together with you. Our survey does not only cover heterosexual relationships, but also same-sex relationships. If you have a partner of the same sex, please answer the following questions as well." All respondents conforming this question were considered as currently being involved in a non-residential partnership. For the Czech Republic, answers on this question were lacking.

In order to obtain a empirically based classification of LAT relationships, the analytical variables were selected with information about the availability of data for several countries as given in table 1 in mind. Two indicators were not (adequately) measured in the Generations and Gender surveys. Only information about activity status could give limited insight in respondent's financial independency and information about couple's social activities was completely lacking. Furthermore, data about frequency of contacts between non-residential partners and about LAT as a deliberate choice were only available for a few countries so these variables were eliminated in an early stage of the analysis as LAT indicator. Data for a remaining set of six indicators were available for 10 countries. Since "never lived as couple before" and "children in the household" were strongly correlated, we avoid to include these two indicators simultaneously in the analysis. Following the principle of parsimoniousness, we opt for "never lived as a couple before".

Consequently, five variables were selected to shed more light on these non-residential partnerships at first stage. The age of the respondent and duration of the relationship, both measured in years, were calculated by using time variables about the date of the interview and his/her birth respectively the start of the relationship. Besides these two continuous variables, three dummy variables were also included in order to classify the non-residential partnerships: currently living apart from both parents, having the intention to cohabit or marry within the next three years after the interview and being in a post-union partner status, meaning that the respondent experienced a separation, divorce or bereavement in a previous cohabiting union. Descriptives for these five cluster variables across 10 GGS-countries are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptives of the cluster variables (weighted statistics)

	%	Mean	Stdev	Min	Max
Intention to cohabit	61,2				
Post-union partner status	42,1				
Living apart from parents	57,3				
Age		33,8	14,4	17	81
Duration of the relationship		4,4	6,8	0	63

Although data of 15 countries were currently available, only 10 countries could be included in the analytical sample at first stage: Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Georgia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Romania and Russia. Other countries did not met the data requirements necessary for the analyses with the five indicator variables given in table 2. In table 3, unweighted sample sizes were given for these 10 GGS-countries. The second column represents all respondents for whom information about the current partnership status is available, the third column shows the number of non-residential partnerships for which detailed information required for further analysis is available.

Table 3. Wave 1 Generations and Gender Survey datasets for 10 countries (unweighted N)

	All	Non-residential partnerships
Belgium	7149	686
Bulgaria	12819	689
Estonia	7855	73
France	10079	1033
Georgia	10000	148
Lithuania	10036	472
Netherlands	8161	602
Norway	14826	1369
Romania	11986	409
Russia	11222	1094
Total	104133	**6575**

2.5 Method

K-means cluster analysis is used in order to classify all non-residential partnerships (Kaufman and Rousseeuw 1990; Aldenderfer and Blashfield 1984; Everitt 1993). Since the purpose of cluster analysis is to place objects into groups or clusters, as suggested by the data, and not defined a priori, this technique corresponds most to the main goal of this paper. This kind of disjoint classification technique aims that objects belong to one and only one cluster and that objects in a given cluster tend to be similar to each other while objects in different clusters tend to be dissimilar. Similarity is measured as Euclidean distances, meaning that the cluster centers are based on least squares estimation. This technique starts with an initial (random) solution as vectors of means (1)and reclassifies the input data recursively till differences between the recalculated vector of means and the original one fail to increase the convergence criterion (2).

$$m(t=0) = [m_1, m_2, \ldots, m_k]^T \quad (1)$$

$$\left|\left|m(t) - m(t-1)\right|\right| < \zeta \quad (2)$$

Since this technique assigns each observation uniquely to one cluster, a cluster membership variable can be deduced from the cluster solution. This cluster variable allows us to compare not only the meaning of the clusters across Europe but also cross-national equivalences or dissimilarities regarding the incidence of the different non-residential partnership types can be explored.

2.6 Results

Table 4 shows that the incidence of relationships in which partners are not living together with each other in the same household goes from almost 10% of all respondents experiencing such non-residential partnership in Belgium, France, Norway and Russia over around 5% in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Netherlands and Norway to less than 2% in Estonia and Georgia.

Table 4. Incidence of non-residential partnership across Europe (in %)

Belgium	Bulgaria	Estonia	France	Georgia	Lithuania	Netherlands	Norway	Romania	Russia
9,5	4,8	1,0	8,8	1,5	5,2	7,4	9,6	4,2	8,6

In order to explore the meaning of these non-residential partnerships in depth, a four cluster solution based on the five cluster variables mentioned above will be presented. This cluster solution was obtained after the seventh iteration meaning that the change in cluster seeds at this iteration was less than the convergence criterion. The overall-all R^2 of the final cluster solution is .84. A three cluster solution revealed a R^2 of .74. A five cluster solution led to a R^2 of .86. Using the elbow method we opted for the four cluster solution. This decision was also supported by the results of cluster analyses for the different countries separately. For Belgium, Bulgaria and Romania -although being countries with large sample sizes- a fifth cluster led to clusters with a very small number of observations (<5.) Table 5 gives the cluster means for each cluster variable of the four clusters.

Table 5. Cluster centers of a K-means cluster solution on non-residential partnership across Europe

	POSTUN_MID	COMMIT_LAT	POSTUN_OLD	DATING_LAT
Left the parental home (0,1)	85%	89%	97%	45%
Ever separated, divorced or widowed (0,1)	73%	37%	89%	22%
Partnership duration (in years)	4,6	30,4	6,3	2,2
Intention to cohabit within 3Y (0/1)	53%	40%	28%	73%
Age (in years)	42	58	61	24
Incidence (in %)	28%	5%	13%	54%

Two third of all respondents assigned to the first cluster ever experienced a dissolution in a previous cohabiting union. The cluster means shows that those respondents are 42 years old on average and have been in a relationship with a non-resident partner since more than four (4,6) years. One half of all respondents has the intention to start cohabiting within 3 years with the partner with whom he/she is currently involved in a non-residential partnership. This cluster is labeled as POSTUN_MID. One fourth of all European respondents (28%) having a partner with whom they are not living with are assigned to this cluster.

The second cluster COMMIT_LAT is very small, only 5% of all respondents have a non-residential relationship characterized as follows: only one third ever experienced a separation, divorce or bereavement and only four out of ten have the intention to live together within three years. Furthermore, these respondents are on average 58 years old and their relationship is long-standing (almost 30 years).

Analogously with the first cluster, the third cluster labeled as POSTUN_OLD refers also to a post-union type of non-residential partnership. Almost nine out of ten respondents experienced a dissolution in a previous union. The mean duration of their non-residential relationship is 6,3 years. Contrary to the first cluster, respondents assigned to the third one are older (61 years on average) and only 28% of the respondents express an intention to start cohabiting within the next three years. 13% of all European respondents involved in a non-residential partnership are assigned to this cluster.

At last, DATING_LAT is the largest cluster (54%) and classifies very young people with a short-term relationship. This cluster centers around the age of 24 and a relationship with an average duration of 2,2 years . Furthermore, 55% of these respondents is still living with one or both parents, the intention to live together with the current partner is clearly marked (73%) and only on fifth of these respondents have been living together with another partner (22%).

Table 6 shows how membership of different clusters varies across Europe. In most European countries the majority of non-residential partnerships are among young people mainly living with their parents and currently having a partner with whom they don't live together but strongly intended to do so in the next three years (DATING_LAT). Only in Estonia and Georgia, the amount of people assigned to the POSTUN_MID cluster is as large as or even larger than the cluster of dating young adults. Besides in these two countries, also in Belgium (28%), France (27%), The Netherlands (33%), Norway (28%) and in Russia (33%) more than a quarter of all non-residential relationships is between partners around 40, experiencing a post-union relationship with the intention to start living together within the next three years (POSTUN_MID). This cluster is smaller in Bulgaria (18%), Lithuania (23%) and Romania (21%). The amount of older people experiencing a post-union relationship without any intention to live together (POSTUN_OLD) varies between 2 and 22% of all non-residential partnerships across countries. This type of relationships occurs more frequently in Belgium (13%), France (17%), Netherlands (16%) and Norway (22%) compared to Bulgaria (3%), Estonia (8%), Georgia (2%), Lithuania (7%), Romania (10%) and Russia (7%). Lastly, the cluster classifying older people with a longstanding first non-residential partnership without any intentions to live together (COMMIT_LAT) is small in all countries (less than 7 %) except in Estonia (12%) and Georgia (28%).

Table 6. Membership of different clusters across Europe (in %)

	Belgium	Bulgaria	Estonia	France	Georgia	Lithuania	The Neth.	Norway	Romania	Russia
C1	27,9%	18,6%	39,7%	26,6%	36,5%	23,3%	33,1%	28,2%	21%	33,3%
C2	3,4%	3,3%	12,3%	5,8%	28,4%	4,7%	6,3%	2,4%	4,9%	7%
C3	12,8%	2,8%	8,2%	17%	2%	7,4%	15,8%	22,1%	9,8%	7,2%
C4	56%	75,3%	39,7%	50,5%	33,1%	64,6%	44,9%	47,3%	64,3%	52,5%
LAT	9,5%	4,8%	0,9%	8,8%	1,5%	5,2%	7,4%	9,6%	4,2%	8,6%

*C1= POSTUN_MID, C2=COMMIT_LAT, C3=POSTUN_OLD, C4=DATING_LAT

Next, we explore the between-country variability regarding the meaning of the different clusters.

Table 7 shows the cluster centers for all countries separately.

Table 7. Cluster centers of a k-means cluster solution on non-residential partnership for all countries separately

		BE**	BU	ES	FR	GE	LI	NE	NO	RO	RU
Intention to cohabit	C1	58%	66%	59%	61%	75%	41%	35%	51%	77%	42%
	C2	22%	62%	11%	34%	74%	14%	8%	6%	80%	56%
	C3	41%	26%	50%	32%	0%	31%	11%	23%	50%	28%
	C4	76%	70%	93%	86%	59%	70%	66%	69%	85%	66%
Post-union partnership status	C1	84%	44%	69%	79%	24%	62%	76%	82%	55%	76%
	C2	30%	22%	33%	53%	2%	57%	37%	67%	30%	38%
	C3	85%	84%	100%	88%	67%	88%	88%	91%	73%	94%
	C4	47%	8%	24%	24%	6%	23%	25%	23%	9%	25%
Living apart from parents	C1	91%	43%	62%	97%	56%	85%	99%	97%	70%	77%
	C2	91%	87%	78%	98%	86%	86%	100%	100%	80%	77%
	C3	98%	84%	67%	98%	67%	94%	100%	99%	95%	88%
	C4	21%	20%	24%	64%	14%	47%	69%	64%	26%	44%
Age	C1	43,4	39,2	41,0	42,3	40,0	41,3	41,8	42,0	40,3	41,8
	C2	62,8	53,8	59,8	59,5	54,4	53,0	60,0	62,9	58,6	55,4
	C3	60,2	59,8	59,0	61,3	59,7	59,7	63,1	61,4	60,4	59,4
	C4	23,0	23,9	25,8	23,7	26,0	23,4	25,4	23,6	25,0	23,6
Partnership duration	C1	4,3	5,7	5,1	3,8	11,9	5,1	4,4	2,9	4,8	5,4
	C2	33,2	31,4	31,7	28,7	30,6	29,0	35,1	25,7	31,8	29,9
	C3	5,2	5,3	7,7	6,6	10,1	6,3	7,1	6,1	6,4	6,9
	C4	2,5	2,6	2,8	2,2	3,4	2,1	2,4	1,6	2,4	2,2

*C1= POSTUN_MID, C2=COMMIT_LAT, C3=POSTUN_OLD, C4=DATING_LAT
** Belgium - Bulgaria - Estonia - France - Georgia - Lithuania - Netherlands - Norway - Romania – Russia

As confirmed by the ANOVA statistics (not presented), the age and partnership duration are the strongest variables to distinguish the four clusters. Less between country variability is found within the clusters regarding these two cluster variables.

Most variability between countries within clusters is found on the cluster variables regarding the intention to cohabit and the occurrence of a previous cohabiting union. In three out of four clusters (POSTUN_MID, COMMIT_LAT, POSTUN_OLD) the intention to cohabit is lower for the Dutch respondents. For Georgia, the respondents assigned to POSTUN_OLD and DATING_LAT are less likely to intend to live together with the current partner. On the other hand the intentions to live together with the current non-residential partner is stronger in Belgium (POSTUN_OLD), Bulgaria (POSTUN_MID, COMMIT_LAT), Estonia (POSTUN_OLD, DATING_LAT), France (POSTUN_MID), Georgia (POSTUN_MID, COMMIT_LAT), Romania (POSTUN_MID, COMMIT_LAT, POSTUN_OLD, DATING_LAT) and Russia (COMMIT_LAT).

The likelihood of being in a post-union partner status is for all clusters lower in Bulgaria, Georgia and Romania compared to other countries. Higher rates of being post-union

are denoted for Belgium (POSTUN_MID, DATING_LAT), France (COMMIT_LAT), Lithuania (COMMIT_LAT) and Norway (POSTUN_MID, COMMIT_LAT).

The 40 years old respondents with a postunion LAT relationship (being in POSTUN_MID) are more likely to live apart from the parents in France, Norway and the Netherlands, while these respondents are less likely to live apart from the parents in Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia and Romania. The same tendencies can be found for the young dating people, but for this cluster (DATING_LAT) also Belgian respondents are less likely to live apart from their parents.

This between country variability on the variables "living apart from the parents", "being in a postunion partnership status" and "intention to cohabit" gives substantial insight into the realization of the different types of LAT relationships across Europe. Differences and equivalences about how people live in their LAT relationships, what their intentions are for the near future and where they can be situated on partnership continuum from a life course perspective can be revealed by including these three variables into the model.

From a model-oriented perspective only, the statistics regarding the total and within variance for each cluster variable assumed that a valid cluster solution can be built even more parsimoniously by using only the variables "age" and "duration of the LAT relationship". Such alternative four cluster analysis with only these two cluster variables led to the same cluster solution. Only three observations are assigned to another cluster in this more parsimonious cluster model.

This result shows that all relationships with a non-residential partner can be situated on a partnership continuum by using only information about age of the respondent and duration of the relationship. A robustness check with a four cluster solution obtained for each country separately confirmed this finding. For almost all countries four equivalent clusters could be revealed. Only for Estonia, Georgia and Norway the cluster means for age and duration varied somehow compared to the overall model with all countries simultaneously involved. In Estonia and Georgia, more longstanding LAT relationships were found: two clusters instead of one contain respondents having a relationship with a non-residential partner for 20 years or more. On the contrary, in Norway 12 years was found as the largest mean duration across the four types of LAT relationships. So it seems that longstanding LAT relationships are more common in Estonia and in Georgia and more rare in Norway compared to other European countries.

2.7 Discussion

In this article, we dealt with the question how to measure LAT relationships in large scale surveys. By defining LAT relationships as different categories of a broader classification of non-residential relationships, we kept in mind the varying European landscape of present-day families. From a life course perspective, we used respondents' detailed information on union formation including current partnership and partnership history in order to find relevant variables distinguishing between different types of LAT relationships. Since a data-driven explanatory analysis was the aim of this article, no restrictions other than data limitations were imposed to the definition and classification of LAT relationships.

Using five cluster variables (living independently from the parents, never lived as a couple before, intention to cohabit in the future, age of the respondent and duration of the relationship), a K-means clustering procedure on all relationships in which respondents do not live together with their partner, revealed four types of non-residential partnership across Europe. Although some indicator variables were binary variables, the model converges after only 7 iterations to stable and meaningful cluster assignments with a R^2 of .84. The cluster solution showed two clusters, labeled as postunion 40 and POSTUN_OLD, that brought together respondents experiencing a higher order relationship. The difference between both was given by the mean age of the respondents and the intention to start living together with the current non-residential partner. Respondents assigned to the POSTUN_MID category/cluster were quite younger than those from POSTUN_OLD and their intention to start cohabiting was more pronounced. Referring to the life course perspective as presented in figure 1, POSTUN_OLD could be considered a committed LAT relationship that functions as an alternative to a second marriage or a new unmarried cohabitation. POSTUN_MID, on the other hand, seemed to serve as a prelude to such higher-order cohabiting union. Respondents classified to the other clusters did not experience a previous cohabiting union. Another cluster, labeled "DATING_LAT", encompassed young respondents who were on the verge of adulthood, 45% of whom had already left the parental home. The remainder part was still living with at least one parent and expressed a very strong intention to start living together with their current partner within the next three years.. This type of non-residential partnership serves as a precursor to a first cohabiting union. The cluster "COMMIT_LAT" was the smallest and involved older respondents in long-standing non-residential relationships with weak intentions to live together. Referring to the partnership continuum, this type of non-residential partnership also served as a substitute to married or unmarried cohabitation.

The results of this study confirm that LAT partnerships are heterogeneous in nature and that their meanings vary substantially across the life course (Roseneil 2006; Irene Levin and Jan Trost 1999; Ghazanfareeon Karlsson and Borell 2002). For the young, LAT mainly serves as a prelude to cohabitation or marriage. This group of respondents is classified as the cluster "DATING_LAT". To others –closely resembling to "POSTUN_MID" in the cluster solution presented above-, LAT is a temporary living arrangement based on necessity (e.g. care responsibilities for children or elderly parents). While most of these 'involuntarily' (Haskey and Lewis 2006) non-residential couples expect to cohabit within a few years, others, mostly older couples, perceive LAT as a more permanent arrangement, allowing both intimacy and autonomy (Levin 2004; Beaujouan et al. 2009). The latter couples are the respondents of the "COMMIT_LAT and "POSTUN_OLD" clusters. The observed heterogeneity within our sample of non-residential individuals is in line with existing qualitative research on LAT partnership (Lyssens-Danneboom et al. 2013; I. Levin and J. Trost 1999).

In literature LAT partnerships have also been identified on the basis of their motives for engaging in a LAT arrangement (Irene Levin and Jan Trost 1999; Levin 2004; Roseneil 2006), their daily practices within the relationship (Irene Levin and Jan Trost 1999; de Jong Gierveld 2004a; Ghazanfareeon Karlsson and Borell 2002; Haskey and Lewis 2006) or distances between the partners' dwellings (Haskey and Lewis 2006; Reimondos et al. 2011). The GGS-data did not provide any information about the non-residential couple's daily practices or social activities so this indicator could not be included in our analysis. Additional information on the motives underlying LAT, the distance between the partners' homes and the frequency of face-to-face contact only was available for six countries. Inclusion of the 'choice of being in a LAT relationship'-indicator about hardly influenced the cluster solution for these six countries. The respondents belonging to the "DATING_LAT"- and the "POSTUN_MID"-cluster were more likely to perceive their LAT arrangements as a choice constrained by circumstances than the respondents of the "COMMIT_LAT"- and "POSTUN_OLD"-clusters. On the contrary, if also distance between dwellings and frequency of contacts were included in the model, major changes in the cluster solution appeared. In this alternative cluster solution, the four clusters were strongly defined in terms of contactibility whereby distance was obviously negatively associated with contact frequencies. We ignored this cluster solution because it did not match the theoretical choice of interpreting different types of LAT relationship from a partnership continuum or life course perspective.

From a measurement perspective, a more parsimonious model gives empirical evidence that three indicators are sufficient to detect and situate LAT relationships on a partnership

continuum: (1) having a non-residential partner, (2) age of the respondent and (3) duration of the LAT relationship. Classifying relationships with a non-resident partner can efficiently be done if information about age of the respondent and duration of the current LAT relationship is available. The R^2 of such restricted model was still .80.

This study has its own limitations. We are aware that we did not analyze in-depth the question regarding the definition of having a relationship itself. Instead of presenting a study that compares different question wordings, we opted to take a general question from a cross-national survey and to perform a cluster analysis to identify different meanings of LAT relationships. Hereby, we assume that the respondent's own perception of what a relationship can or must imply is crucial. By doing so our study is in line with the very first definition of LAT relationships (Irene Levin and Jan Trost 1999), including the central notion of partners' perception of themselves as a couple.

Although we used data from a wide range of European countries, their cross-sectional nature still limits our understanding of LAT partnerships from a life course perspective. Longitudinal data providing information on outcomes of LAT partnerships in terms of continuing the LAT relationship, making the transition to a cohabiting union or experiencing a dissolution, would give more insight into the mechanisms of the partnership continuum presented in figure 1.

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3 *Neither Single Nor in a Couple* in France: What became of them three and six years later?

By Arnaud Régnier-Loilier (INED)

3.1 Background and objectives of the research

Although the acronym LAT – living apart together – dates back to the late 1970s,[1] the number of demographic studies concerning non-cohabiting couples remains limited, despite what appears to be a renewed interest in the concept of late.[2] Of course, this is due in part to the data available, with the number of surveys that include questions of this nature having increased only in recent years. This is the case in particular of the *Generations and Gender Survey*, currently under way in around 20 countries, which dedicates a specific module of its questionnaire to individuals in a stable intimate relationship with someone who does not live in the same dwelling.[3] The estimates cited for Europe stand at around 1 in 10.[4] In many cases, however, the category of *non-cohabiting intimate partners* is considered as a whole, the idea being to measure the magnitude of "the LAT phenomenon", compare the situation in different countries, and aim to identify the characteristics associated with these situations. And, more often than not, it is assimilated – erroneously, in our view – into the concept of *living apart together*, whereby, according to the definition proposed, for example, by Irene Levin (2004) in her qualitative study, the "couple has to agree they are a couple; others have to see them as such; and they must live in separate homes" (p. 227). And yet, in many cases, anyone who declares that they are in a privileged and intimate relationship with someone living elsewhere is considered as being a LAT, however long the relationship and regardless of how each of the partners sees themselves (i.e. in a couple or not).

This confusion no doubt explains in part why different interpretations of this phenomenon exist in the literature, as recently documented by Simon Duncan, Julia Carter,

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[1] See Levin, 2004, for example, for an explanation of the origin of this acronym (p. 227).
[2] Specific sessions have been explicitly dedicated to the subject, such as the "Families Living Apart" session at the Population Association of America's 2013 annual meeting; other recent calls for contributions, such as AIDELF's for 2014, which seeks to explore the theme of "Ways of forming (or being in) a couple, including semi-cohabiting couples and LAT (living apart together) couples".
[3] The *Fertility and Family Surveys* conducted in the 1980s and 1990s already included questions of this nature, but which were less comprehensive.
[4] This proportion is debatable, as it depends on the questions asked in the surveys and the definitions used, with the boundaries of the concept remaining extremely blurred (Régnier-Loilier, 2014*(f)*); however, this is not the point in question here.

Miranda Phillips and Sasha Roseneil (2013). As a result of the large portion of the population concerned – recently highlighted by newly available data[5] – this phenomenon has come under the spotlight, and therefore tends to be perceived as the expression of a "new form of conjugality". This is all the more true given that certain studies have sometimes revealed an over-representation of the most highly qualified women who end up in this form of relationship by "choice", as a possible expression of strategies to delay the entry into a consensual union in order to pursue long university-level studies and thus be able to aspire to a job that enables them to escape domestic responsibilities and an overly traditional division of tasks and roles (see, for example, Di Giuglio, 2007 with regard to Italy). This is reminiscent of the modes of diffusion of what was known as "juvenile cohabitation" – i.e. where couples live under the same roof before marriage – a few decades ago in France and more generally in Northern Europe. This modernist vision of couple formation, visibly less common in Eastern Europe than Western Europe, and typically less often motivated by a desire to remain independent, seems to reflect a growing individualism and appears to support the theory of a Second Demographic Transition (Liefbroer *et al.*, 2012).

However, the proportion of people in stable intimate relationships but not cohabiting with their partner in fact masks a variety of situations. While it is true that this form of relationship can last and be a deliberate choice – as documented, for example, by Vincent Caradec (1997) among "young older couples" and Jenny de Jong Gierveld (2004) – it may also simply be a (new) step towards cohabitation or marriage. In this sense, it could be compared to the periods of premarital "courtship" that many spouses-to-be experienced in 1950s France (Girard, 2012 [1964]). Of course, the form of this "courtship" has changed over time, as has the process of choosing one's spouse, by being less marked by parental and family control and the watchful gaze of relatives and close friends.

The variety of realities thus covered by the acronym LAT (living apart together) led us, in a previous study, to attempt to propose a typology of people who are *neither single nor in a couple*, based on quantitative data (Régnier-Loilier *et al.*, 2009). Four profiles in particular emerged: *young people*, *single parents*, *non-family individuals* and *seniors*. As the names suggest, age characteristics and conjugal and reproductive histories clearly differentiated each group; in addition, the relationships themselves appeared to be quite different in nature, in terms of how they were experienced (choice or constraint), their organization (time-related

[5] Sometimes calculated as the ratio of individuals in non-cohabiting relationships to only those individuals who do not live with a partner (see, for example, Liefbroer *et al.*, 2012), which helps to exaggerate the magnitude of this phenomenon (with proportions approaching 25%).

considerations, frequency with which partners see each other) and their future prospects (intention to cohabit). LATs thus appear to constitute a particularly heterogeneous category. For some – what would appear to be a minority (Duncan and Phillips, 2010; Liefbroer, 2012) – their relationships can be interpreted as the expression of a form of individualism; for others, they seem rather to correspond to a form of continuity, representing instead a step towards cohabitation (Duncan *et al.*, 2013).

The aim of this study is to support our initial observations by investigating the "conjugal outcomes", three and six years down the line, of those identified as being *neither single nor in a couple* in the first phase of the French version of the *Generations and Gender Survey* (with the same individuals having been surveyed on three occasions: see data). In other words, what has become of our *young people*, *non-family individuals*, *single parents* and *seniors*? Are they still in non-cohabiting intimate relationships with the same partner? Have they moved in together? Or have they separated? Although certain groups are still in the same situation, the signs of a new form of long-term conjugality, which may contribute to the modernist vision of LATs, are visible. Conversely, although some other groups may tend more towards cohabitation, their past situations should be considered as preliminary stages that prepare them for life under the same roof. Finally, in groups where most individuals have separated, we may find signs of relationships that are significant but short-lived, which may be evidence of first romantic experiences that could not strictly be considered to be living apart together.

In addition to considering the outcomes of the four populations identified in 2005, which remain a construction and, ultimately, a sub-classification of the LAT category, we shall look more closely at the very characteristics of the individuals and their relationships at the time by seeking to establish which of them are more likely to lead to certain outcomes – namely a stable, long-lasting non-cohabiting relationship, a step towards cohabitation, or separation.

3.2 Data, preliminary checks and analytical methods

3.2.1 Data: the French GGS

As mentioned above, our study uses longitudinal data from the French version of the *Generations and Gender Survey*. This survey, currently under way in around 20 countries, has been conducted in France since 2005 by INED (Institut national d'études démographiques – French National Institute for Demographic Studies) and INSEE (Institut national de la

statistique et des études économiques – French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies). During the first phase, 10,079 individuals residing in family/private households were surveyed. Each respondent, aged between 18 and 79, was selected at random from the household and was asked questions regarding their childhood, their past and present conjugal situations, their children, their occupational situation (and, where relevant, that of their partner), their well-being, and their opinions (for more details concerning the international questionnaire, see Vikat *et al.*, 2007; for more details on the French survey, see Régnier-Loilier, 2012).

However, in cases where respondents did not indicate that they lived in their dwelling with a partner, the following question was asked: "Are you currently in a stable intimate relationship with someone with whom you do not live? This can include your husband/wife if you do not live together."[6] If the answer to this question was affirmative, a series of questions would follow regarding the reasons for not cohabiting, the length of the relationship, its organization in practical terms (e.g. how often the two partners see each other, the distance between their respective homes), and future prospects for cohabitation. Of the 10,079 individuals surveyed, 1,033 were in this situation. Scaled up to the French population as a whole in the field in question in 2005, this would suggest that some 3.8 million individuals in France consider themselves to be in this situation, which must not, however, be confused with the situation of "non-cohabiting couples", which by contrast concerns only around 1.4 million people in France (Buisson and Lapinte, 2013).

Three years (late 2008) and six years on (late 2011), the same people were contacted again and asked to participate in a similar questionnaire. It is therefore possible to obtain information on their situations at three different points in time and, via comparisons, reconstitute their reproductive, conjugal and occupational trajectories. However, as in all panel-based surveys, the initial sample suffered significant erosion with each subsequent phase: only 6,534 individuals participated in the second questionnaire, and 5,779 in the third (including 350 people who did not participate in the second survey). The distortion of the sample in terms of its characteristics was consistent with observations made of other surveys of this kind: levels of attrition were greater among younger respondents, those living alone, those of foreign nationality, and those with fewer qualifications; and some respondents proved somewhat distrustful during the first phase and refused to answer certain questions,

[6] Unlike certain surveys, such as the 1996–1998 *General Social Survey* in the US (Ströhm *et al.*, 2009) or the 2002/2003 *Omnibus Survey Sample* in the UK (Haskey, 2005), the question asked here did not incorporate any restrictions regarding marital status.

and furthermore showed little interest in the Phase 1 results (refusing to receive the initial results) or refused to give details of persons to contact in the event of them changing address (Régnier-Loilier, 2012). Some of these attrition-related factors were taken into consideration in the construction of the survey's longitudinal weightings, which were adjusted according to the structure of the sample as observed in Phase 1 (2005).

Attrition was not therefore random, and in particular was stronger among young people and single-person households. As these characteristics were used in the construction of the four profiles of people in stable relationships during the first phase, it is possible that attrition led to a degree of bias in the structure of the longitudinal samples that the weighting variables could not satisfactorily correct. Before examining the impact of attrition on our study population, let us first briefly touch upon the way in which we constructed our four groups of individuals who are "*neither single nor in a couple*" during the first phase of the survey.

3.2.2 Background regarding the construction of our four profiles based on the first survey phase

In our previous study (Régnier-Loilier *et al.*, 2008), several configurations for *stable intimate relationships* emerged, for which we proposed a hypothesis based on very different operational approaches and intentions regarding cohabitation. In order to study motives and plans while also taking into account the highly heterogeneous characteristics of these individuals, we developed a "factor-based" classification using the factorial coordinates resulting from a multiple correspondence analysis (MCA). The typology was not determined on the basis of variables such as reasons for dual residence (choice or constraint), shared life plans or the duration of the relationship (aspects of the relationship that we wished to analyse), but rather on the basis of gender, age, partners' occupational situations, the number of previous consensual unions and the distance between partners' dwellings. As a result, while certain variables – such as gender, whether or not individuals have already lived together with a partner, and travel times between two residences – played a role in the calculation of these factors, it was variables such as age and the presence of children that dominated the classification process. By the end of this process, four groups had emerged:

- A first group, comprising 42% of the "non-cohabitants", was composed exclusively of *young people* aged under 25, who were single, had no children and in most cases had never been in a cohabiting couple. Owing to their age, one of the two partners was a student in three quarters of cases.

- A second group (9% of non-cohabitants) comprised *single parents*, most of whom were women. The vast majority were aged between 25 and 54, with considerable numbers of divorced individuals.
- A third group (14% of non-cohabitants) comprised people aged 55 and over, most of whom were no longer in employment and had children who no longer live with them. Within this group of *seniors*, a wide variety of conjugal histories could be found, often with several unions involving cohabitation and significant numbers of widowed individuals.
- A fourth and final group (35% of non-cohabitants) was defined more by its differences with regard to the other three profiles than by any particular shared characteristic among its members. It comprised people aged between 25 and 54, most of whom had no children. As a result of these characteristics, this group, described as *non-family individuals*, occupied an intermediate position between the *young people* and the *single parents*, but, unlike the majority of *young people*, the individuals in this group no longer lived with their parents and, unlike single parents, did not have children.

These four groups shall be used in part of our longitudinal analysis.

3.2.3 The issue of attrition in the study of non-cohabiting intimate relationships

The sample suffered an attrition rate of almost 35% between the first two phases, increasing to 43% for Phase 3; moreover, this attrition was not random. In particular, it concerned greater numbers of individuals living alone, including some who were in non-cohabiting relationships. However, this factor was not taken into consideration as such during the construction of the weightings. An examination of the effects of attrition on the structures of the four groups of individuals who are "*neither single nor in a couple*" described above would therefore seem necessary.

Broadly speaking, we observed lower rates of attrition among cohabiting couples and, conversely, higher rates among those individuals not in relationships and those who indicated they were in non-cohabiting stable intimate relationships (Table 1).

Table 1. Attrition rates between phases according to conjugal situation observed in 2005 (Phase 1)

	Attrition rate P1–P2	Attrition rate P1–P3
Couple	31,6	38,6
Neither single nor in a couple	39,9	48,7
Single	40,8	48,9
All respondents	35,2	42,6

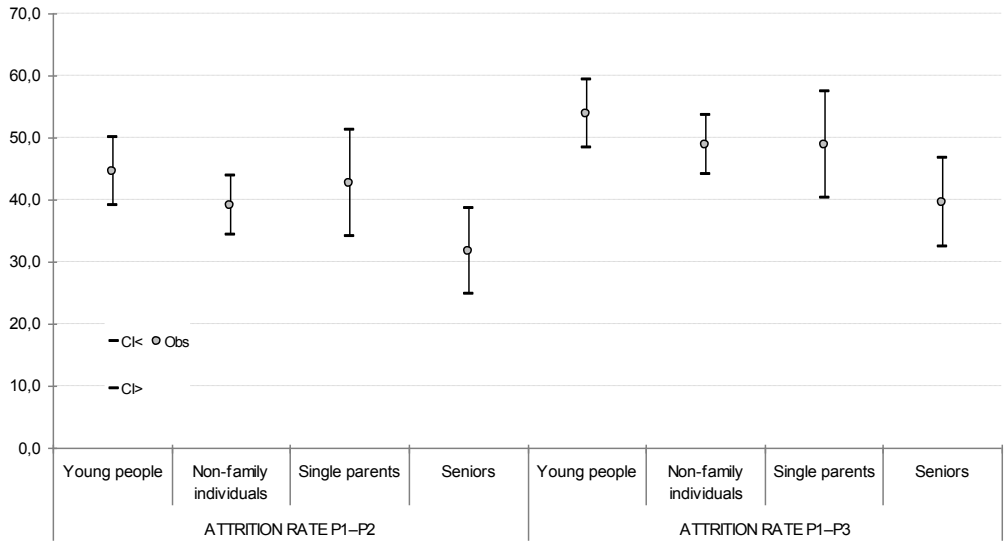
Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS123, 2005–2011

More specifically, owing to characteristics specific to each of our four groups of individuals who are "*neither single nor in a couple*", we might expect greater levels of attrition among the *young people*. Figure 1 highlights a significantly lower rate of attrition among *seniors* than among *young people* in both Phases 2 and 3; however, there is no clear distinction between these groups and the other two (*non-family individuals* and *single parents*). It is therefore necessary to ensure that the weightings correctly adjust our study population according to the initial distribution observed in Phase 1. To this end, the following were compared (Figure 2):

- the distribution of our four groups in Phase 1, after the application of the weighting relative to Phase 1 (2005);
- again, the distribution observed in Phase 1, but restricting the observation to only those respondents who participated in Phase 2, after the application of the longitudinal weighting for Phase 2 (2008); and
- again, the distribution observed in Phase 1, but restricting the observation to only those respondents who participated in Phase 3, after the application of the longitudinal weighting for Phase 3 (2011).

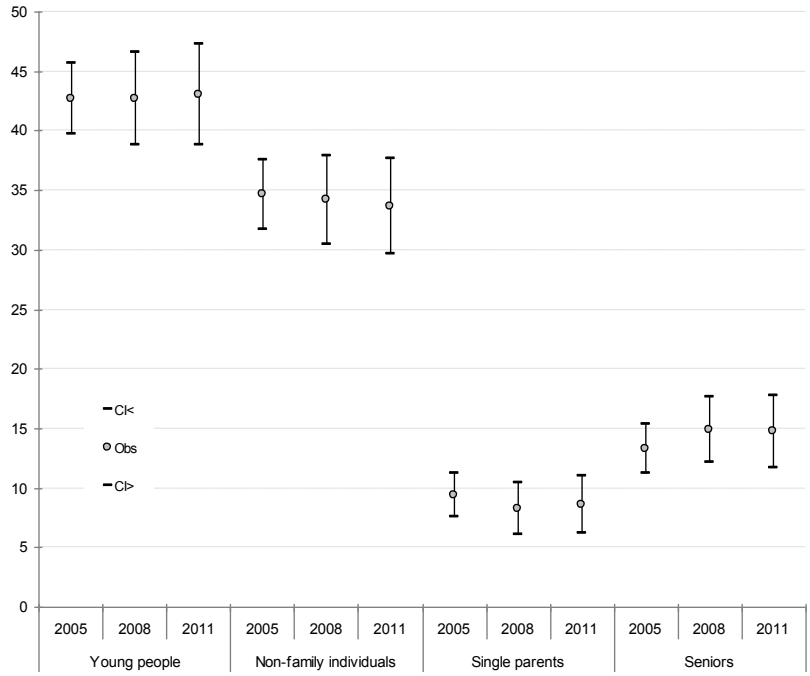
The distribution of the four groups in Phase 1 is identical, whether based on the full 2005 sample, the sample of respondents in Phase 2 or the sample of respondents in Phase 3. The weightings thus appear to be effective from this standpoint and ensure the representativeness of our four groups for a longitudinal analysis.

Figure 1. Attrition rates for the 4 profiles of non-cohabiting respondents between Phases 1 & 2 and between Phases 1 & 3*



Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS123, 2005–2011
* proportions observed and 5% confidence intervals

Figure 2. Distribution of the 4 profiles of non-cohabiting respondents observed in Phase 1, on the full 2005 sample, limited to those who responded in Phase 2 (2008), and limited to those who responded in Phase 3 (2011)*



Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS123, 2005–2011
Interpretation: the proportion of *young people* identified on the basis of the full 2005 survey (1,033 persons in non-cohabiting relationships) was 43% in 2005, after the application of the weighting variable relative to Phase 1. This proportion remains unchanged (43%) if observations are restricted to only those respondents in non-cohabiting relationships in 2005 who responded during Phase 2 in 2008 and Phase 3 in 2011 (621 persons and 530 persons respectively), and after the application of the weighting variable relative to Phase 2 and Phase 3 respectively.
* *proportions observed and 5% confidence intervals*

3.2.4 Method

In order to study the outcomes of those respondents who were *neither single nor in a couple*, we shall use the longitudinal data from Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the survey, by restricting the field of observation to only those persons who were in this situation in 2005 (n = 1,033 persons in Phase 1). Owing to attrition, the number of observations was 621 in 2008 and 530 in 2011.

First and foremost, we shall compare the conjugal situations of our four groups of individuals in 2005 with the two subsequent phases. They may still be in a non-cohabiting relationship, in a cohabiting couple, or living on their own. In the first two cases (in a non-cohabiting relationship or in a cohabiting couple), this may be with the same person as in 2005 or with a different person, this latter case corresponding to a termination of the non-

cohabiting relationship observed in 2005 (or the death of a partner[7]). For those respondents living on their own, this also indicates that the persons in question are no longer in a relationship with their partner from 2005 (or that their partner died).

Initially, we shall consider all of these "outcomes" and then, in view of the relatively limited numbers of respondents, we shall consider just three outcomes: still in a non-cohabiting relationship with the same person; cohabiting with this person; or separated from this person (this last category covers single people and also people who are in a relationship (cohabiting or non-cohabiting) with a different partner than in 2005).

Next, we shall proceed with a descriptive analysis that, for each of the groups identified in 2005, evaluates the characteristics that have tended to encourage certain outcomes in relationships. Owing to the decreasing number of respondents in each phase and the small number of people who were still in non-cohabiting relationships six years after the first phase (n = 64), we shall restrict our observations to the two first phases (2005–2008).

Finally, leaving aside the four groups, the construction of which are closely linked to the characteristics of their members, we shall proceed with a multinomial analysis of two pairs of contrasting situations: still being in a non-cohabiting relationship versus having moved in together; and still being in a non-cohabiting relationship versus having separated.

3.3 Results

3.3.1 What has become of the LATs three and six years later?

For each of the non-cohabiting relationship profiles described in phase 1, Figure 3 shows the conjugal situations in phases 2 and 3. We should first of all note that the proportions observed here may be open to debate.[8] The first remark that can be made is that the magnitude of transitions observed between phases confirms the observations of Haskey and Lewis (2006)

[7] During Phases 2 and 3 of the survey, a question was asked regarding how the non-cohabiting relationship described in Phase 1 ended (by separation or following the death of the partner). However, this question was not asked in every single case owing to a filtering error in the questionnaire (only those respondents who were in a new relationship with a new partner were asked; those respondents living alone were not asked this question).

[8] Although the separation of a couple typically leads to one or even both of the two ex-partners moving out, increasing the risk of attrition (as the loss of contact is more frequent in such cases) and thus potentially leading to underestimations of numbers of separations in the long term, it is reasonable to suppose that the dissolution of a non-cohabiting union leads only rarely to either partner moving out. By contrast, however, when persons in a non-cohabiting relationship enter into a cohabiting union, this necessarily leads to at least one (if not both) of the partners moving out of their existing dwelling. It is therefore possible that the proportion of people in non-cohabiting intimate relationships who ultimately move in together is underestimated here. We shall therefore simply aim to compare sub-groups, without seeking to provide any precise measurements of transitions.

on the "fluidity with which people make transitions in and out of relationships" (p. 42):[9] only 22% of those who were *neither single nor in a couple* were in the same situation three years later, falling to 11% in the third phase (six years later). However, the proportions observed differ significantly from one profile to another, confirming the heterogeneity of *non-cohabitants* in terms of both their characteristics and their relationship outcomes.

If we concentrate first on the three years following Phase 1 of the survey (Figure 3a), the *seniors* category appears to have remained stable in every respect: 6 out of 10 of them are still in a relationship with the same person and, of these, 9 out of 10 are still in non-cohabiting situations. The likelihood of *seniors* having moved in with their partner from 2005 is low (7%). At the opposite end of the spectrum, the *young people* category is characterized by far greater instability. Over a quarter of them were in a new relationship (cohabiting or otherwise) three years later, of whom two thirds were still non-cohabiting. At the same time, it is also in this category that transitions from *non-cohabiting* to *cohabiting* status (with the same person) were the most frequent (36% of cases). The *non-family individuals* most resemble the *young people*, with quite a marked tendency towards a change of partner (17%, compared with 5 to 7% of *seniors* and *single parents*). Midway between these two extremes, the *single parents* are a little more similar to the *seniors* in terms of emotional stability (6 in 10 are still with the same person) but are closer to the *young people* and *non-family individuals* in terms of transitions to cohabitation (which concerned a third of *single parents*).

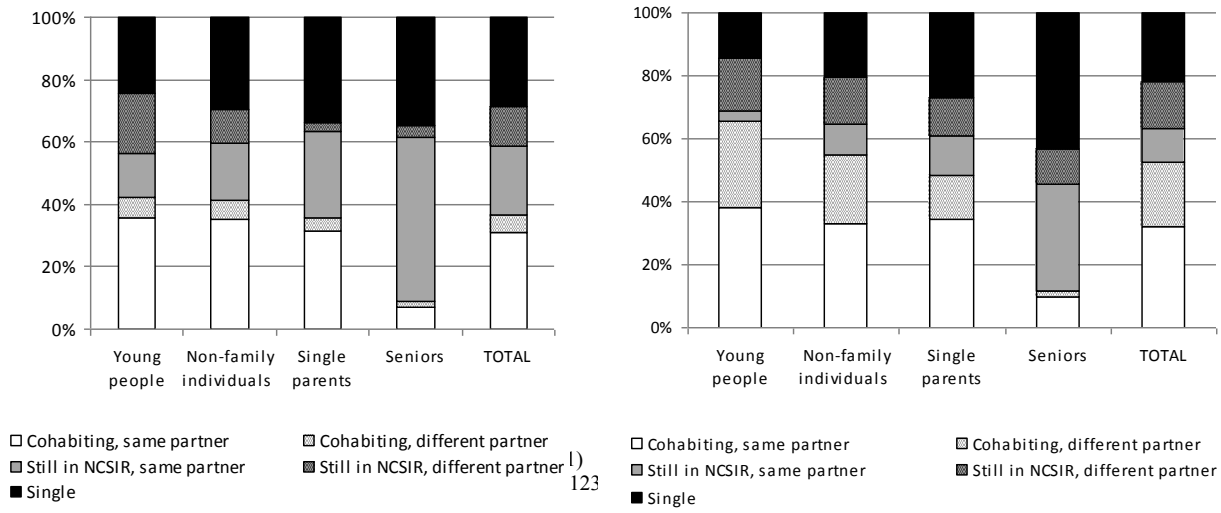
If we look at the results six years later (Figure 3b), the *seniors* group continues to stand out clearly from the other categories: although the proportion of individuals now alone is by far the highest among the four groups (43%), reflecting not just break-ups but also deaths of partners (in 2011, the members of the group were aged between 61 and 85), this group continues to stand out clearly from the other categories, due to its greater stability in terms of both their intimate relationships and the conjugal form of these relationships: a third are still in a non-cohabiting relationship with the same partner, with just 10% having moved in together. By contrast, compared with 2005, almost half of *young people* have changed partner (44%) and, of these, 6 in 10 share the same dwelling. But ultimately, this is the group for which the proportion of individuals in non-cohabiting relationships in 2011 was lowest (20%). A non-cohabiting relationship can therefore be interpreted in most cases as a step towards cohabitation that may resemble pre-cohabitational "courting" but which, given the significant proportion of changes of partner, may also correspond to first experiences of

[9] Catherine Villeneuve-Gokalp (1997) also highlighted the fact that, in France, "few couples withstand a sustained residential separation": five years after the start of the union, only 12% were still together living in two different dwellings (p. 1063).

intimate relationships, characterized by short durations. The *non-family individuals* and *single parents* continue to occupy intermediate positions, with the latter less likely to be in situations of cohabitation than the former.

Figure 3. Changes in the conjugal situations of non-cohabiting stable relationships first surveyed in 2005…

a. in 2008 *b. in 2011*



1) 123

Interpretation (Figure 1a): between 2005 and 2008, 36% of *young people* began cohabiting with the same partner as in 2005 (7% with a different partner), while 14% are still in non-cohabiting stable relationships (NCSIR) with same partner (19% with a different partner), and 25% are single.

In 2009, we had noted that the prospects for cohabitation were very different for each of the four groups. While 84% of *young people*, 72% of *non-family individuals* and 61% of *single parents* intended to move in together in the next three years, this was the case for only 28% of *seniors* (Régnier-Loilier *et al.*, 2009). In light of this, we can say that, broadly speaking, cohabitation was more common for those groups where more individuals expressed intentions to live together.

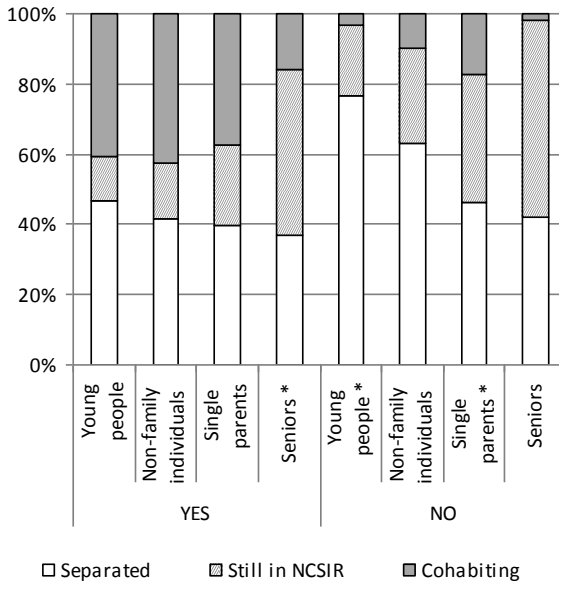
This relationship can be seen in Figure 4a: moving in with the same partner as in 2005 was more frequent, regardless of the group, among those individuals who intended to cohabit than among those who did not share this intention, albeit with the exception of the *seniors* (of whom, irrespective of the intentions declared, very few moved in with their partner). With regard to separations, these do not appear to depend on the group for those individuals who declared an intention to move in with their partner (the relationship ended in 4 out of 10 cases). However, the frequency of separation differs significantly by group among those respondents who did not intend to live together. For example, three years later, three quarters of *young people* were alone or in a relationship/union with another person, compared with just

42% of *seniors*. The calculation of confidence intervals (at the 5% threshold)[10] confirms a significant relationship between the intention to cohabit and the probability of separation among *young people* and *non-family individuals*. The intention to live together would therefore appear to be an indicator not only of the likelihood of moving in together (except for *seniors*) but also of the likelihood of separation for *young people* and *non-family individuals*.

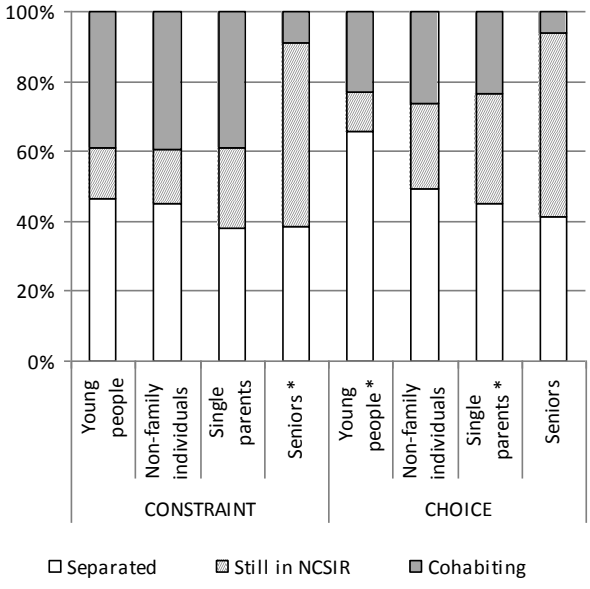
Exactly the same trends can be found if the outcomes of the four groups are broken down not in terms of the intention to live together but instead in terms of the reasons given to justify non-cohabitation, i.e. by constraint or by choice (Figure 4b). Where non-cohabitation is perceived as a "constraint", the frequency of cohabitation is identical for three groups (4 in 10 cases), but much lower for the *seniors*. In cases where it was perceived as a "choice", the end of the relationship was much more common among *young people* than for the other groups.

Figure 4. Outcomes of the 4 groups of non-cohabiting individuals three years later (% separated, still non-cohabiting and cohabiting)

a. By intention to live together declared in 2005



b. By reason for non-cohabitation in 2005

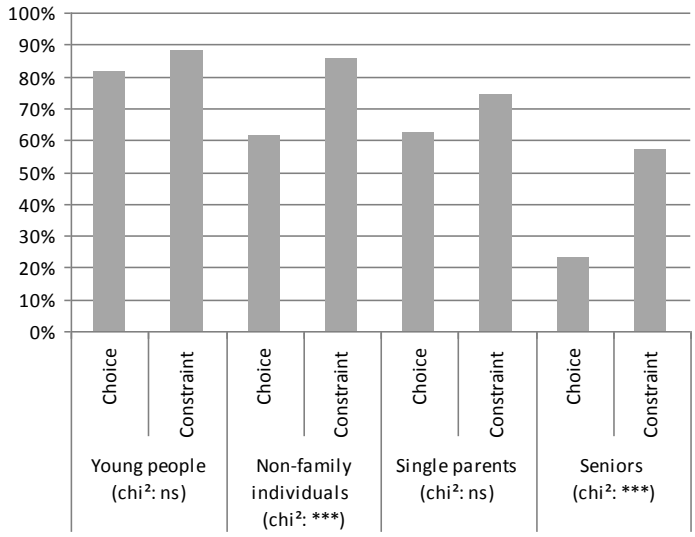


This suggests a strong correlation between the intention to live together and the reason stated to justify the non-cohabitation situation; however, in reality, this correlation is found for just two of the four groups, namely *non-family individuals* and *seniors* (Figure 5). For *young people* and *single parents*, on the other hand, the reason for non-cohabitation and the

[10] Justified by the low numbers of individuals in certain groups: see the graph in the appendix.

intention to live together are not significantly linked (chi-squared test). For these two groups, we find the ambivalence in their responses that Duncan *et al.* (2013) have highlighted. For the *young people*, the notion of constraint may be linked to the fact that they still live with their parents and, it must be said, the absence of any intention to cohabit, as revealed by the 2009 Italian survey *Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali*. This study is largely identical to the *GSS*, but with an additional option in response to questions about living together: "I've never thought about it before". In Italy, this option garnered over 35% of responses from the under-25s (i.e. the *young people* age group) (Mazzuco, Régnier-Loilier and Vignoli, 2014). In the "classic" version of the *GGS*, and more specifically in the French version, the absence of this option forced young people to pick between choice and constraint, even though the question is not really appropriate to their situation. For the *single parents*, on the other hand, choices and constraints sometimes converged to form a "constrained choice", as shown by the results of Simon Duncan's team (2013). The presence of children from a previous union may mean that respondents do not wish to cohabit – a situation that may be considered a choice for some ("because of my children, this is what I choose"), but a constraint for others ("my situation – with children for whom I am responsible – prevents me from living with my partner"). These apparent contradictions (e.g. not living together because of constraints, but not wishing to live together either) shows the complexity involved in precisely defining these situations.

Figure 5. Proportion of persons who, in 2005, expressed an intention to cohabit within the next three years for each group, by reason given to justify non-cohabitation (choice or constraint)



Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS12, 2005–2008 (n = 621)
Key: chi²: ns = not significant at 10%; chi²: *** = significant at 1%
Interpretation: 81% of the young people who declared they did not live with their partner by "choice" in 2005 said they intended to move in with their partner at some point in the following three years

If we examine the link between the reason for non-cohabitation and the intention to cohabit, there are clear differences between the four groups (Figure 6). Very few of the *young people* see their relationship situation as a choice and do not intend to move in with their partner (4%), unlike the *seniors* (47%). Conversely, a great many respondents in the *young people* category see their non-cohabitation as a constraint and intend to move in with their partner (70%, compared with 22% among *seniors*). At the same time, however, the combination of the reason for non-cohabitation and the intention to live together strongly determines the outcomes of non-cohabiting couples (Figure 7). This therefore explains, in part, why very few of the *young people* are still in a non-cohabiting relationship with the same partner three years later, and why the likelihood of respondents having moved in with their partner is highest in this group (Figure 6). The responses of the *single parents*, on the other hand, are more varied, with 32% of individuals stating that they intend to move in with their partner within three years and currently do not cohabit by choice, and 36% currently not cohabiting by constraint. In reality, the outcomes of this group appear more diverse, with more or less equal numbers of separations, cohabitations and unchanged (non-cohabiting) situations (Figure 7).

Figure 6. *Choice/constraint and intention to cohabit for each of the 4 profiles of non-cohabiting respondents*

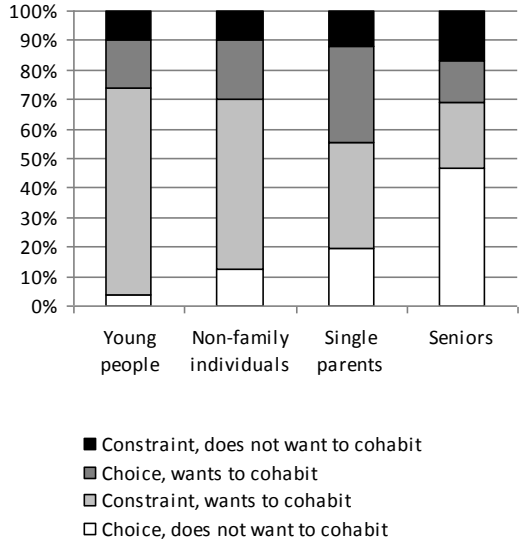
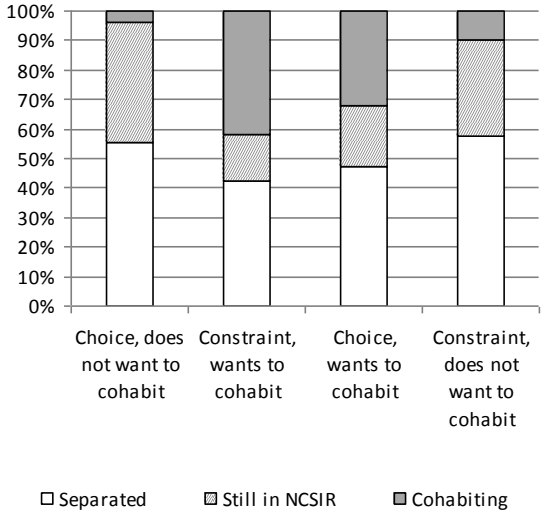


Figure 7. *Outcomes of individuals neither single nor in a couple, by choice/constraint and intention to cohabit*



Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS12, 2005–2008 (n = 621)
Interpretation: 4% of *young people* stated in 2005 that they "chose" not to live with their partner and did not intend to move in with them within three years, 70% said that their non-cohabitation was by "constraint" and that they did intend to cohabit within three years, etc.

3.3.2 Which characteristics lead to which outcomes?

As we have seen, the outcomes of non-cohabiting relationships vary considerably for the four profiles described above, each of which has (by their very definition) specific characteristics. Leaving aside the 2005 typology, we wish to see which characteristics of individuals or their relationships are most conducive to still being in a non-cohabiting relationship three years on (reflecting a form of long-term relationship), to moving in together (indicating that non-cohabitation was a transition towards cohabitation) or to the relationship in question coming to an end.

With regard, first of all, to the individual characteristics (Table 2), the proportion of individuals still in a relationship with the same partner but not living together is significantly higher for older respondents: whereas 14% of those aged 30–39 are still non-cohabiting, over half of the 60–79 age group are in this situation. Retired (in both phases) and widowed respondents are more likely to be in the same situation as in 2005; this is closely linked to their age. The transition to cohabitation tended to concern above all the intermediate age ranges (22–39 years), with 46% of those aged 22–29 having moved in with their partner. This is an age where occupational situations become more stable, facilitating access to housing. Accordingly, moving in together was much more common among those who were students or employed on fixed-term contracts in 2005 and who obtained a permanent contract between the two survey phases.[11] Finally, relationships ended more frequently among the youngest respondents (53% of those aged 18–21 were no longer with their partner from 2005), which unsurprisingly included many students and many people still living with their parents.

[11] Here, we might suggest a causal link, even though the numbers of respondents and the data available do not enable us to verify this link (in particular, it would have been interesting to compare the dates on which respondents left full-time education or a fixed-term contract, and on which they moved in with their partner).

Table 2. Outcomes of non-cohabiting relationships three years later according to different individual characteristics (% in columns 3 to 5)

		Separated	Still in NCSIR	Cohabiting	N
GENDER	Male	52,6	18,5	29,0	246
	Female	41,9	25,6	32,5	375
AGE IN 2005	18–21	52,6	17,2	30,2	115
	22–29	47,0	7,5	45,5	139
	30–39	48,6	13,8	37,6	101
	40–49	40,1	34,3	25,6	91
	50–59	38,0	45,8	16,3	90
	60–79	43,8	50,9	5,3	85
CHANGE IN OCCUPATIONAL SITUATION BETWEEN 2005 AND 2008	Still in employment with a permanent contract	46,1	19,2	34,7	218
	Still a student/unemployed/with a fixed-term contract	57,2	14,3	28,5	135
	Still retired/disabled	43,3	52,5	4,2	90
	From student to permanent contract	32,2	23,6	44,2	45
	From fixed-term contract/unemployed to permanent contract	40,4	11,9	47,8	52
	Other transition	43,6	27,9	28,5	81
HIGHEST QUALIFICATION IN 2005	< Baccalauréat (high-school diploma)	49,4	24,8	25,7	239
	Baccalauréat (high-school diploma)	51,1	19,4	29,5	162
	2 years of higher education	41,7	19,4	39,0	75
	Higher qualification	38,9	23,1	38,0	145
SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY IN 2005	Farmer, tradesperson, craftsperson	50,1	37,2	12,7	30
	Manager	44,3	22,7	33,0	70
	Intermediate occupations	37,5	27,7	34,8	164
	Clerical worker	47,2	18,4	34,4	153
	Manual worker	50,9	25,0	24,1	82
	Economically inactive	54,3	16,5	29,2	28
	Student	50,8	18,8	30,5	94
PLACE OF RESIDENCE IN 2005	Living with parents	52,2	15,1	32,7	130
	Not living with parents	43,4	27,0	29,6	491
LEGAL MARITAL STATUS IN 2005	Single	49,4	16,6	34,0	435
	Married	19,9	46,1	34,0	28
	Divorced	42,9	36,3	20,8	115
	Widowed	38,4	57,8	3,8	43
PRESENCE OF RESPONDENT'S CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD IN 2005	No	47,1	21,8	31,1	527
	Yes	45,2	26,3	28,5	94
CONJUGAL & REPRODUCTIVE HISTORY	Never been in a couple, no children	48,5	17,0	34,5	256
	Already been in a couple, no children from a previous relationship	49,8	17,1	33,2	122
	Already been in a couple, with children from a previous relationship	41,4	36,5	22,1	232
	Children with current partner	52,6	22,0	25,4	11
ALL RESPONDENTS		**46,9**	**22,3**	**30,8**	**621**

Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS12, 2005–2008

Interpretation: 53% of men in non-cohabiting stable intimate relationships (NCSIRs) in 2005 separated from their partner between 2005 and 2008 (or their partner died), 18% remained in a non-cohabiting relationship with their partner, and 29% moved in with their partner.

With regard to the characteristics of the relationship described in 2005 (Table 3), the more specific reasons for non-cohabitation – beyond "choice" or "constraint" – unsurprisingly influenced the non-cohabiting relationship in different ways: those respondents who chose not to live with their partner in order to maintain their independence were still in a non-cohabiting relationship three years on in 40% of cases, compared with 18% of those who gave a reason relating to work or studies. For these latter respondents, the transition to cohabitation was much more frequent (41%). Finally, separations were most frequent among individuals who said they were not ready to cohabit (55%) or that their partner had "another family" (60%), although it is not known what exactly is covered by this reason (already in a relationship with someone else? Other children from a previous relationship?).

Long relationships (5 years or more) were much more likely to still be going strong in 2008 (45% of those relationships that had lasted between 5 and 8 years in 2005 were still ongoing three years later), while the shortest relationships (2 years or less) more often than not resulted in separation (52%) and relationships in progress for 3 to 4 years often led to cohabitation (38%). Non-cohabitation thus covers a number of very different realities and

situations: for some people, this form of relationship is a long-term reality; for others, it accompanies a period of initial discovery in a burgeoning relationship where there is still a degree of uncertainty as to its sustainability; and for others still, it is an initial phase that may lead to eventual cohabitation.

Table 3. Outcomes of non-cohabiting relationships three years on according to different characteristics of the relationship (% in columns 3 to 5)

		Separated	Still in NCSIR	Cohabiting	N
REASON FOR LIVING APART IN 2005	Choice of one partner	55,0	29,1	15,9	125
	Choice of both partners	46,7	30,0	23,3	129
	Constraint, no response	44,9	18,6	36,5	367
SPECIFIC MOTIVE FOR LIVING APART IN 2005 (situation where n = 30 at least)	Maintaining one's independence	47,7	40,2	12,1	118
	Full-time education, work	40,6	18,0	41,4	120
	Not ready to live together	54,5	20,7	24,7	84
	Financial situation	47,2	13,9	39,0	48
	Housing problems	47,3	12,1	40,6	39
	Partner has another family	60,4	25,4	14,2	33
LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP IN 2005	0–2 years	52,4	14,3	33,3	342
	3–4 years	44,9	17,5	37,6	88
	5–8 years	28,8	45,1	26,1	100
	9 years or more	44,3	41,7	14,0	91
TRAVEL TIME BETWEEN PARTNERS' HOMES IN 2005	Less than 10 minutes	30,0	32,4	37,6	94
	10 to 20 minutes	51,7	20,1	28,2	204
	21 minutes to 2 hours	49,4	22,1	28,6	120
	More than 2 hours	47,9	20,0	32,1	203
FREQUENCY WITH WHICH PARTNERS SAW EACH OTHER IN 2005	Every day (or almost)	37,5	23,0	39,5	162
	A few times a week	52,4	21,0	26,6	277
	Once a week	45,9	30,8	23,3	91
	A few times a month	51,2	18,8	30,0	68
	A few times a year, never	42,2	12,4	45,5	23
ALL RESPONDENTS		**46,9**	**22,3**	**30,8**	**621**

Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS12, 2005–2008
General interpretation and distribution: *cf. Table 2.*

The distance separating partners' homes, together with how often they see each other, are factors that are more difficult to understand and explain. Relationships where partners see each other very frequently (a probable sign of a high degree of closeness between partners who get on well together) or, conversely, where partners see each other only occasionally (a possible sign of residential separation for professional reasons, for example) more often resulted in cohabitation. On the other hand, relationships where partners saw each other "once a week" (exactly) typically remained non-cohabiting, and typically resulted in separation in the case of relationships where partners saw each other "a few times a week".

During the first phase, a set of questions was asked that sought to identify what, according to the respondent, would be "better" and what would be "not as good" if they were to move in with their partner, and on what the decision to cohabit would depend. Comparing these responses with the outcome of the relationship (Table 4) gives results that are not particularly clear or, at best, difficult to interpret. Broadly speaking, those respondents who indicated that cohabiting would be "not as good" in terms of doing what they wanted in their

everyday lives more often experienced separation or remained in non-cohabiting relationships. Conversely, those who felt that cohabiting would be "much better" in terms of doing what they wanted in their everyday lives, in terms of their financial situation, or in terms of the happiness and satisfaction they would gain in general were far more likely to end up moving in with their partners. The trends are, however, far less clear with regard to the factors that determine the decision to live together or not, probably due to insufficiently precise questions and the potentially very different ways in which these questions may have been interpreted, depending on respondents' situations, intentions regarding cohabitation,[12] etc.

Table 4. Outcomes of non-cohabiting relationships three years later, according to the responses to three perception-related questions (% in columns 3 to 5)

WOULD COHABITING BE BETTER...		Separated	Still in NCSIR	Cohabiting	N
... IN TERMS OF DOING WHAT YOU WANT IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE?	Much better	35,8	16,4	47,8	128
	Better	48,9	19,0	32,1	222
	Neither better nor worse	46,0	24,7	29,2	158
	Not as good	58,5	34,3	7,2	87
	Significantly worse	66,8	30,8	2,3	15
... IN TERMS OF YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION?	Much better	39,6	17,8	42,6	106
	Better	45,3	20,9	33,9	240
	Neither better nor worse	47,9	27,2	24,9	186
	Not as good	49,9	21,8	28,4	53
	Significantly worse	52,1	27,6	20,3	13
... IN TERMS OF THE HAPPINESS AND SATISFACTION YOU GAIN FROM LIFE?	Much better	44,5	16,2	39,3	220
	Better	47,5	21,1	31,4	248
	Neither better nor worse	43,4	37,0	19,6	113
	Not as good	75,0	25,0	0,0	21
	Significantly worse	64,9	29,1	5,9	7
INTENTION TO LIVE TOGETHER IN 2005	No	60,0	35,7	4,3	113
	No, probably not	52,6	39,0	8,5	85
	Yes, probably	51,3	18,9	29,8	196
	Yes	37,3	15,8	46,9	227
ALL RESPONDENTS		**46,9**	**22,3**	**30,8**	**621**

Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS12, 2005–2008
General interpretation and distribution: *cf. Table 2*.

3.3.3 All other things being equal

As indicated in the descriptive analysis, a certain number of characteristics overlap (for instance, widowhood and being retired become more frequent as one gets older). To facilitate our reasoning with "all other things being equal", a series of models were produced; however, owing to highly reduced numbers of respondents, it was not possible to include many variables.

The aim of the different models proposed was not to enter into a fine level of detail but above all to compare two situations in order to see different profiles emerge: on the one hand,

[12] The results are not, therefore, presented here.

still non-cohabiting (between 2005 and 2008) versus moving in with one's partner; on the other hand, still cohabiting versus separated. The choice of variables was made principally on the basis of the numbers of respondents present for the various options and the "repetitiveness" of the data they contain (for example, age was preferred over both marital status (thus depriving us of measurements of the net effect of widowhood, for instance) and occupational status (retired, student, economically active, etc.), as these three variables are too closely intercorrelated). The four profiles constructed in Phase 1 are not incorporated either, as they are mechanically linked, by their very design, to certain key variables of the model such as age or conjugal and reproductive histories – exactly the kind of factors for which we wish to estimate the effects on relationship outcomes.[13]

All other things being equal (Table 5), the probability that respondents are still non-cohabiting, as opposed to having moved in with their partner (Model 1), is strongly linked to four variables: age, intention to cohabit within three years, the duration of the relationship, and the reasons justifying non-cohabitation. Older respondents are more likely to still be in the same situation. Age accounts for a large proportion of the *seniors* group, who are more often retired or widowed, and the group of *young people*, who more often are students and have never cohabited with a partner. Furthermore, non-cohabitation situations tend to be longer-lasting among those respondents who say they do not wish to move in with their partner, those who described non-cohabitation as a choice on their part, and those whose relationships had been ongoing for five to eight years in 2005. Unlike the results of the descriptive analysis, no significant effects were noted relating to conjugal and reproductive histories, all other things being equal.[14]

If we now compare cases of continued non-cohabitation with cases of separation (Table 5, Model 2), we find the same effects relating to age and relationship length (specifically older respondents and respondents in relationships for five to eight years), but neither the intentions regarding cohabitation nor the reasons for non-cohabitation in 2005 (choice versus constraint) were shown to be significant here (whereas the effects in the descriptive analysis were quite marked: cf. Tables 3 and 4). We should note that women were less likely to have separated. This could indicate that women and men did not answer the question of the existence of a *stable intimate relationship* in exactly the same way, with men

[13] The same models were produced by replacing age and conjugal/reproductive history by the profile from the classification established at the start of the first phase. The same effects were observed. Only the *seniors* group stood out from the others with a stronger probability of still being in a non-cohabiting relationship during Phase 2 rather than cohabiting or having separated.

[14] This is in part due to the introduction of covariates in the model; however, the absence of effects in the model (both for this covariate and for others) must be interpreted with care, as the numbers of respondents involved are low.

perhaps more easily considering themselves in a stable intimate relationship than women, even when they are in less advanced relationships. For example, we know that they tend to declare higher numbers of sexual partners in surveys, in part because they do not "count" them in the same way as women, who typically tend to include only those relationships that were emotionally important to them (Leridon, 2008). This interpretation is supported by the work of Haskey (2005), for whom the interpretation of this kind of question remains highly subjective and variable, depending on the characteristics of the groups concerned (gender, age, history, etc.).

Table 5. Modelling the probability of still being in a non-cohabiting relationship three years later versus the probability of being in a cohabiting relationship or separated (logit model) depending on different factors relating to the first phase (2005)

		Still in a non-cohabiting relationship *versus…*			
		cohabiting *(model 1)*		being separated *(model 2)*	
Constant		-1,87	**	-2,17	***
GENDER	Female	0,39	-	0,55	**
	Male	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
AGE	18–21	0,30	-	0,13	-
	22–29	-1,04	*	-0,59	-
	30–39	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
	40–49	1,29	**	1,28	**
	50–59	1,95	***	1,75	***
	60–79	3,71	***	1,70	***
REPRODUCTIVE & CONJUGAL HISTORY	Never been in a couple	-0,62	-	-0,18	-
	Already been in a couple but no children	-0,57	-	0,30	-
	Children from a previous relationship	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
	Children with current partner	0,62	-	0,70	-
CHOICE OR CONSTRAINT	Choice for both partners	0,25	-	0,28	-
	Choice for one partner	1,23	***	0,07	-
	Constraint	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
LENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP	0–2 years	-0,38	-	0,28	-
	3–4 years	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
	5–8 years	1,62	***	1,45	***
	9 years or more	-0,65	-	0,36	-
INTENTION TO LIVE TOGETHER	No	2,01	***	-0,43	-
	No, probably not	1,99	***	0,00	-
	Yes, probably	0,68	**	0,02	-
	Yes	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
TO BE ABLE TO DO WHAT YOU WANT IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE, LIVING	Less good	0,76	-	-0,20	-
	Neither better nor worse	-0,26	-	-0,05	-
	Better	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
THE DECISION TO COHABIT DEPENDS ON YOUR INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP	Very much, enormously	-0,60	*	0,14	-
	A little	0,14	-	-0,17	-
	Not at all	0,00	ref	0,00	ref
Still in a non-cohabiting relationship (n, *%*)		153	*44,9*	153	*35,7*
In a couple cohabiting with the same partner / Separated		188	*55,1*	276	*64,3*

Source: INED–INSEE, ERFI–GGS12, 2005–2008
Key: ref = reference situation; *** = effect significant at the 1% level; ** = at the 5% level; * = at the 10% level; - = non-significant factor
Interpretation (Model 1): a positive (or respectively negative) and statistically significant coefficient indicates that the factor in question increases (or respectively decreases) the probability of still being in a non-cohabiting relationship with the same partner in 2008 rather than having moved in with this partner.

3.4 Overview and discussion

The literature on the subject of partners *living apart together* is gradually becoming more comprehensive in both the fields of demography and sociology. Certain sociological studies, typically supported by qualitative studies, tend to focus on particular aspects of the phenomenon and, to a certain extent, on a more restrictive and more precise definition of the phenomenon. Levin (2005), for example, proposes a definition that is at pains to distinguish between a "non-cohabiting *intimate relationship*" and a "non-cohabiting *couple*". In quantitative studies, by contrast, there are rarely any explicit references to the notion of the "couple",[15] with the term *LAT* being used to cover any individuals who do not have a partner with whom they live, and who declare that they are in a "stable intimate relationship". This category thus includes a range of different realities.

In order to reflect this diversity, a typology of these individuals who are *neither single nor in a couple* was proposed (Régnier-Loilier *et al.*, 2008) based on the first phase of the *Étude des relations familiales et intergénérationnelles* (the French version of the *Generations and Gender Survey*). Four profiles emerged: *young people*, *non-family individuals*, *single parents*, and *seniors*. As the same respondents were re-interviewed three and six years later, we sought to establish which conjugal outcomes had been experienced by the individuals in each of these groups. Were they still in the same relationship – and, if so, were they living with their partner? Or had they separated from the partner they were with in 2005? Furthermore, were the respective proportions the same for each group?

First of all, the study showed that non-cohabiting relationships were short-lived overall. Only 22% of them were still ongoing three years later, falling to 11% a further three years later. These results do not, therefore, point to any major developments with regard to long-term non-cohabitation as a lifestyle choice – however, the proportions of transitions to cohabitation with the same partner, to a new relationship (cohabiting or not) or to living alone (i.e. not in a relationship) do clearly differentiate the four groups of our typology. Barely one in ten of the respondents in the *young people* category in 2005 (Phase 1) was still in a non-cohabiting relationship with the same person three years later (2008), with this proportion dropping to zero a further three years on (2011). By contrast, the group of *seniors* stood out

[15] In France, the 1994 survey titled *Enquête sur les situations familiales et l'emploi* (INSEE–INED) incorporated this notion; above all, the 2011 survey titled *Famille et logements* (INSEE) explicitly addresses the notion of the couple via the following question: "Are you currently in a couple? 1. Yes, with someone who lives in the same dwelling; 2. Yes, with someone who lives in a different dwelling; 3. No, but I have been in a relationship in the past. 4. No, and I have never been in a relationship."

for its much greater stability, with over half still in the same situation three years later, and around a third in the same situation six years on.

These longitudinal results – already detectable transversally by considering the average relationship lengths for respondents from the different groups – highlight such a diverse range of situations that we feel it is important that any quantitative estimates that may be made with regard to LATs be approached with great care. Although such estimates seek partly to identify potential changes in the phenomenon over time, it is nonetheless vital that we know exactly what it is that these estimates measure. Estimates such as these are also sometimes justified in sociological or demographic studies with regard to social issues – for instance, estimates of housing demand for individuals (Haskey, 2005) – or legal issues – such as estimates that question the absence of legal rights and legal recognition for partners in this situation (Lyssens-Danneboom *et al.*, 2013). Here too, it is important that this phenomenon be more clearly delineated.

Indeed, John Haskey (2005) has demonstrated the extent to which estimates can vary according to the definitions used. In particular, can our definition realistically include younger respondents who still live with their parents? Our results suggest not, at least for the very youngest.[16] We feel that it is not useful to consider what are, in reality, examples of short-term pre-cohabitational "courting" or first romantic experiences as a form of conjugality. By contrast, however, we feel that the situations of the *seniors* group (marked by the far greater stability of their relationships), as well as those of the intermediate groups, warrant further attention. The weakening of unions and widowhood would appear increasingly to go hand in hand with "re-partnering" without cohabitation, in response to specific constraints such as those highlighted by Vincent Caradec (1997) among the over-50s (e.g. not wishing to "impose" a new partner on one's family in order to maintain good relations with them, ownership of a house to which one or other partner is particularly attached, existence of a conjugal history that one does not seek to forget or deny), or in response to a fear of reproducing (and/or a refusal to replicate) past mistakes by cohabiting again (see, for example, Levin, 2004). By more precisely delineating the boundaries of this phenomenon and by measuring the way it changes, it may be possible to provide some responses to the social and legal issues that accompany the existence of this form of relationship.

The results of this study would also seem to confirm the highly detailed observations of Duncan *et al.* (2013) with regard to the difficulty involved in precisely identifying the

[16] Certain studies cite reasons for not cohabiting such as one partner needing to live with an elderly parent for whom they are responsible (see, for example, Levin and Trost (1999) for Sweden, or Milan and Peters (2003) for Canada).

"reasons" for non-cohabitation via quantitative surveys: first of all, there may well be multiple, complex reasons; reasons may coincide with what the individual perceives as the advantages and disadvantages of cohabitation; or, indeed, for a given situation (e.g. having children from a previous relationship), some respondents may define their non-cohabitation as a "choice" while others see it more as a "constraint".

Looking beyond the results of this study, questions may be raised concerning the quality of the information obtained in the surveys and the benefits of collecting longitudinal data. With regard to the questionnaire, we feel it is important in future to include more detailed descriptions of the different situations in order to delineate the boundaries of the phenomenon more clearly and thus obtain better estimates of this phenomenon. To achieve this, however, it is first necessary to agree on what exactly is to be measured, based on a relatively precise definition. For example, asking people "in stable intimate relationships" whether they consider themselves to be "in a couple" (as was the case in certain surveys in France) sheds light on a specific aspect of the issue. The use of longitudinal data in the French version of the *GGS* made it possible, for the first time, to study transitions according to respondents' characteristics, and in particular the transition from a non-cohabiting relationship to separation.[17] However, it did not allow for very precise analyses (by social background, for instance) owing to limited numbers of respondents, which forced us to limit the observation window to the first two phases only of the *GGS*, due partly to attrition, but also to the short-lived nature of the non-cohabitation situations encountered.

[17] No recent retrospective survey conducted in France allows this kind of analysis, as the past conjugal histories of individuals collected in surveys are generally limited to periods of cohabitation. The survey titled *Étude des parcours individuels et conjugaux*, conducted in France in autumn 2013 (INED–INSEE), will enable this type of analysis, as it seeks to describe, for each respondent, all "intimate unions or significant intimate relationships", regardless of whether these led to cohabitation.

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4 Similar incidence, different nature? Characteristics of LAT relationships in France and Italy

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4.1 Introduction

In the social landscape of Europe, family life courses have become more and more diversified over the last decades (Bumpass and Lu 2000; Kiernan 2002; Perelli-Harris et al. 2010, 2012; Vignoli et al. 2014). The increasing alternatives to life-long marriage contributed to a growing range of family arrangements, and they have provided stimuli for new research, such as the fact that the boundaries of a family are no longer exclusively identified by the physical space of a single household (Saraceno 1994; 2012). Living Apart Together (LAT) relationships – i.e., intimate relationships between two persons who reside in different households (Duncan and Phillips 2010) – are therefore gaining relevance among family scholars (Casper et al. 2008; Haskey and Lewis 2006; Levin 2004). For a long time, surveys only considered a tripartite model of intimate relationships in which individuals are classified as "single", "cohabiting" or "married". However, this assumption is incorrect or, at most, incomplete. On the one hand, being married or cohabiting does not always mean still being in a couple. Martin et al. (2011) labeled this situation as *Living Together Apart*. On the other hand, being "single" in residential terms is not necessarily a synonym of being "without a partner" in relationship terms (Castro-Martín et al 2008; Duncan et al. 2013a). This recognition challenges the common assumption that living together in the same household is a requirement for being considered a couple and it calls into question the standard family categorizations in several socio-demographic applications.

Previous qualitative and quantitative evidence for Europe suggest that reasons for forming LAT relationships may be related to a *choice* or a *constraint* and are likely to vary across family life courses (Haskey and Lewis 2006; Levin 2004; Régnier-Loilier et al. 2009). Living apart may be a *choice* based on a desire for greater independence and freedom, or it may be a *constraint* due to circumstances arising from housing availability, employment opportunities, or family circumstances such as caring for children of previous unions or for elderly parents (e.g., Strohm et al. 2009; Liefbroer at al. 2012). Constraints related to difficult housing and growing labor market uncertainties are likely to play a critical role during the early phases of the life course. Alternatively, partners who are older may choose to live apart

in order to facilitate contacts with adult children from previous unions and to maintain privacy and autonomy (Caradec 1997; de Jong Gierveld 2004; Karlsson and Borell 2002). Overall, increasing levels of healthy life expectancy, rising divorce rates, improved transportation and travel as well as increased use of the internet are all reasons to suspect that LAT unions will become more common in the years to come, and will thus contribute to extending the household boundaries of the family (Haskey and Lewis 2006; Levin 2004; Saraceno 2012).

Research on LAT, especially comparative-oriented research, is very recent (e.g., Liefbroer et al. 2012; Sanchez and Goldani 2012). This paper adds to the ongoing debate about LAT relationships by focusing on the characteristics and determinants of LAT in Italy in comparison with France. We know very little about the prevalence and the determinants of LAT relationships in modern Italy. To the best of our knowledge, the two studies we found on Italian LAT relationships are that conducted by Paola Di Giulio (2007), who looked at the phenomenon through the Italian 1995 "*Fertility and Family Survey*", and the one made by Billari et al (2008), who focused on young adults living apart together using data from the 1998 multi-purpose survey on "*Households, Social Subjects and Childhood Conditions*". We know nothing about the incidence and the determinants of Italian LAT in more recent years. In addition, Italy is not included in published or ongoing comparative European studies (Liefbroer et al. 2012; Sanchez and Goldani 2012; Tai et al. 2014). We however believe that Italy is a very interesting case study for assessing incidences and correlates of LAT relationships. Despite the tendency to place a high value on traditional marriage, contemporary Italy faces an increasing breakdown of marriage and the flexibility of union patterns is growing (Gabrielli and Vignoli 2013). Interestingly, family changes are developing hand in hand with a slow but continuous process of secularization (Sansonetti 2009). Thus, this setting is important for eliciting the role of LAT relationship when a society is undergoing secularization and revolutionary family changes. As a benchmark scenario, we compare the situation in Italy with that in France, a neighboring country in which cohabitation is institutionalized, the process of family diversification is much more profound (Régnier-Loilier et al. 2009), and research on LAT has a long tradition[18]. This comparison represents an interesting strategy to test if the differences in incidences and correlates of LAT relationships in Italy as compared to France can be viewed better in terms of delays or, instead, of different routes.

[18] Ined carried out the first French survey including specific questions aimed at identifying LAT relationships already in 1985.

In the following, we first adopt a premise about the main narratives seeking to explain the diffusion of new family behaviors. The paper continues by focusing on the characteristics of the Italian and French contexts that are relevant for our research. The presentation of data, methods, and results follows. We conclude by elaborating on our findings.

4.2 A premise

In this research, we have been driven mainly by our curiosity regarding LAT behaviors in contemporary Italy and France, more so than by any general theory or by a drive to formulate and answer theoretical hypotheses; in our opinion it is too early to attempt such an approach. The closest we have come to a general theory is in addressing the question of whether LAT relationships exhibit any traces of the two popular narratives regarding the diffusion of "new" family patterns: the Second Demographic Transition (SDT) (Lesthaeghe and Surkyn 2002; Sobotka 2008) and the Pattern of Disadvantage (POD) (Perelli-Harris et al. 2010; Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2011).

Based on the theoretical considerations of the SDT, one might expect highly educated people to be at the forefront of adopting new behaviors, such as making the *choice* to be in a LAT relationship. This is because they may maintain more liberal values and may be more resistant to prevailing social stigmas. Thus, the higher educated, the young, and those who are not or not very religious could be expected to be overrepresented among people in a LAT relationship (Strohm et al. 2009). This could be due to several factors (Di Giulio 2007). First, opting for a LAT arrangement might represent a more common choice for people (especially women) with a higher level of education, because it precludes the domestic and family responsibilities associated with co-residence and maximizes their life-long professional career. Second, it could reflect a desire of independence among the better-educated. Finally, residing in two separate homes requires greater financial resources, and education is often considered a valid proxy for labor market characteristics and prospects.

According to the narrative of the POD, it is those groups who are rather more disadvantaged in society (i.e., those with low education and fewer resources) who are more likely to experience "new" types of demographic behaviors (Perelli-Harris et al. 2010; Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2011). In situations where individuals face blocked opportunities and uncertainties, they may need to remain in a LAT relationship until they feel they have a clearer outlook on life. According to this view, people who live in a LAT relationship are not

radical pioneers of family changes, but are cautious and conservative (Haskey and Lewis 2006). The narrative of POD, is in line with a "continuist" interpretation of LAT relationships (Haskey and Lewis 2006; Duncan and Philips 2010; Duncan et al 2013b; Duncan 2014). In this vein, LAT is just another stage in the more and more difficult transition from singlehood to cohabitation or marriage; that or it is an interruption in cohabitation that has been forced by circumstances such as job relocation for one of the partners (Haskey 2005; Haskey and Lewis 2006; Ermisch and Seidler 2009). These latter situations have always existed, but their relevance may have been amplified in recent years: Today, a higher degree of specialization in on-the-job skills is required, and fewer people can easily decide to relocate and assume that they will be able to find a suitable job (Levin 2004: 237).

European cross-national studies on the LAT phenomenon do reveal that, similar to the initial spread of unmarried cohabitation (Kiernan 2004), LAT partnerships are currently more prevalent in Northern and Western Europe than in Eastern Europe (Liefbroer et al. 2012; Sánchez and Goldani 2012). This may be linked to the level of diffusion and institutionalization of "new" family arrangements. In particular, Irene Levin (2004) suggested that "*[C]ohabitation, as a socially accepted institution, was a prerequisite for the establishment of LAT relationships*" (p. 238)[19]. By exploring the prevalence and determinants of LAT relationships in two contrasting settings, the France-Italy comparison offers a privileged position for exploring whether the diffusion of cohabitation within a society represents a prerequisite for the concomitant presence of LAT relationships. Thus, apart from focusing on the similarities and differences in LAT relationships between France and Italy, in the following we will look at our findings also in light of the prevailing narratives of the SDT and POD. The key question is: Are we dealing with a new development of family relationships that family scholars should explore deeply, or are we simply looking at a modern variant of the old-fashioned dating arrangement in times of rising economic uncertainty?

4.3 The France–Italy comparison

Over the last decades, France and Italy displayed visibly different developments in the diffusion of "new" family patterns. In France, the institution of marriage has been profoundly transformed in the last forty years. The number of marriages has fallen (from 390,000 in 1975

[19] Note that she considers LAT as "*a couple that does not share a home. (…) The two partners (…) define themselves as a couple and they perceive that their close surrounding personal network does so as well*" (p. 226-227).

to 240,000 in 2012), while that of cohabitations has increased (11% of couples were not married in 1990 compared to one in four twenty years later). At the same time, unions have become more unstable (while less than 5% of couples formed in the 1950s had broken up after 10 years, the same situation had occurred for one out of five couples formed in the 1980s: Vanderschelden 2006). However, these changes are not associated with a rejection of childbearing as such, and the majority of couples continue to have children: only one woman out of ten remains childless at the end of her reproductive life. Up to the latter half of the 1970s in Italy, family patterns were characterized by very rigid life courses, with marriage at the center. Following that, several signs of change began to emerge. Marriage rates declined slightly, while cohabitation and marital dissolution were spreading throughout the population. These changes intensified in the 1990s and peaked in the first decade of the twenty-first century, when the pace of change rose dramatically. In less than 20 years, between the early '90s and the first decade of the 2000s, the number of cohabiting unions increased from 227,000 to 972,000 and, among them, the number of cohabiting partners who had never married increased from 67,000 to 578,000 (Istat 2011). In addition, the diffusion of cohabitations is no longer confined solely to certain social groups or to certain geographical areas (Gabrielli and Vignoli 2013). Nevertheless, recent qualitative explorations of family formation practices in Italy revealed that familial and social pressure to marry remains strong (Vignoli and Salvini 2014).

The institutionalization of cohabitation is more advanced in France than in Italy, also in light of a different normative environment. In 1999, France created a civil union, the "Pacte civil de solidarité" (civil solidarity pact, known as Pacs), in order to establish an institutional framework for cohabiting couples who do not wish to marry, or for homosexual couples who cannot (Rault 2009). The success of Pacs continues to grow, and in 2013 nearly 168,000 such unions were celebrated (Ministry of Justice) compared to 225,000 marriages (Insee). In contrast, no real establishment of legal regulations devoted to unmarried couples exists in Italy. Legal judgments are essentially made case by case, on the basis of the partners' situation (Zanatta 2008). Individuals living in cohabitation have less protection in the case of separation or the partner's death, because they do not have access to alimony or to the partner's old age pension benefit. In addition, these legal judgments are complex, especially when unmarried partners split up after neglecting to specify who paid which amounts of money for what purpose.

Labor market opportunities and housing costs shape young peoples' ability to move in with a partner (Kohler et al. 2002; Blossfeld et al. 2005; Kreyenfeld et al. 2012; Vignoli et al. 2013). Uncertain forms of employment (temporary, linked to specific projects, and so forth) are increasingly widespread, and none of them are very "protective" for the worker. In 2013, among the countries with the highest incidence of temporary workers within the total number of workers, we find Spain (about 24%) and Poland (about 26%). Italy and France, with 14-16% of temporary workers in the first decade of 2000's, are in line with the majority of Western European countries. These contracts are offered almost exclusively to the youth, whose traditionally high unemployment has not declined significantly in the meantime (Bernardi and Nazio 2005; Barbieri and Scherer 2009). These developments have progressively led to an increased climate of economic uncertainty that has progressively invaded the private life of individuals as well. Recent findings suggest that economic uncertainty has a negative influence on family formation in Italy (Vignoli et al. 2012), as well as in France, although to a lesser extent (Pailhé and Solaz 2012).

The housing situation in France and Italy is not the same. Mulder and Billari (2010) made use of a set of housing-market indicators to cluster four major "home-ownership regimes" based on the share of owner-occupied housing and access to mortgages. According to their categorization, France (together with other continental countries such as Austria and Belgium) belongs to the so-called *elite home-ownership regime*, where home-ownership is not universal and mortgages are not very widespread. Consequently, home-ownership is traditionally a matter for the better off. Italy (together with other Mediterranean countries such as Spain and Greece) belongs to the so-called *difficult home-ownership regime*, characterized by a high share of property-ownership as well as low access to mortgages. There, home-ownership is almost the only way for families to obtain housing.

In a nutshell, contemporary Italy is facing non-negligible changes in family demography patterns, but the institution of marriage still maintains a central role compared with France – e.g., 6% of couples aged 18-49 in 2005 were not married in Italy in contrast to 34% in France. Such comparison represents a so far unexplored room to explore whether the differences in incidences and correlates of LAT relationships in Italy as compared to France can be mostly conceived as a delays or, instead, as a different trajectory.

4.4 Data and methods

Individuals engaged in LAT partnerships are not registered in any official statistics, and there is no generally accepted definition of precisely what LAT constitutes. Thus, providing estimations about their prevalence, their development and the reasons behind them is a complex task. In addition, comparative studies on LAT relationships are often based on surveys that do not dispose of sample weights. Nevertheless, when the aim of a study is to evaluate the strength of a certain phenomenon in different societies, it is crucial to dispose of reliable estimates that are corrected for biases due to sampling-errors. In this study we rely on two large-scale socio-demographic surveys for France and Italy, which allow us to identify LAT relationships as well as to weight their estimates in order to infer their incidence at the population level.

The "Étude des Relations Familiales et Intergénérationnelles" survey (ERFI), the French version of the 2005 "Generations and Gender Survey" (GGS) (Vikat et al. 2007), included questions on LAT relationships. It was carried out in France by INED and INSEE in the autumn of 2005 on a sample of 10,079 men and women aged 18-79 (for more details, see Sebille and Régnier-Loilier 2007). In our analysis, we focused on the answers to the questions: "*Are you currently having a stable, intimate relationship with someone you're not living with? Yes / No*[20]" and "*Are you living apart because you and/or your partner want to, or because circumstances prevent you from living together? I want to live apart / Both my partner and I want to live apart / My partner wants to live apart / We are constrained by circumstances*[21]". The Italian analysis is based on data stemming from the 2009 Household Multipurpose Survey "Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali" (FSS). This survey was conducted by the Italian National Statistical Office (Istat) on a sample of about 24,000 households, corresponding to approximately 50,000 individuals of all ages. Also, this survey included a section on LAT relationships derived from the core GGS questionnaire. In particular, we used the answers to the questions: "*Are you currently having a couple relationship with a partner you're not living with? Yes / No*[22]" and "*Are you living apart because you and/or your partner want to, or because circumstances prevent you from living together? I want to live apart / Both my partner and I want to live apart / My partner wants to live apart / We are*

[20] In French: "*Avez-vous actuellement une relation amoureuse stable avec quelqu'un avec qui vous ne vivez pas ?* Oui; Non."
[21] In French: "*Vivez-vous séparément par choix ou parce que les circonstances vous empêchent de vivre ensemble?* Je veux vivre séparément; Mon conjoint et moi avons décidé de vivre séparément; Mon conjoint veut vivre séparément; Les circonstances nous y obligent.*"*
[22] In Italian: "*Attualmente Lei ha un rapporto di coppia con un partner col quale non vive insieme? Sì; No.*"

constrained by circumstances[23]". We note that the definition of a LAT relationship in Italy is more restrictive than the French one, because it embodies the concept of being a "couple" rather than of being only in a stable and intimate relationship[24].

In the following, we first present a series of descriptive analyses. Through a logit regression model, we then contrast LAT vs. co-resident couples; net of age (grouped into a progressive five-year group categorization); gender; legal marital status (clustered into "single", "married", "separated/divorced", "widowed"); a dichotomous variable indicating whether the respondent has ever had a child; respondent's education (grouped into the three standard levels "low", "medium", "high", which correspond to, respectively, basic education; secondary and upper secondary education; and post-secondary and tertiary education); employment status (divided into "permanently employed", "temporarily employed", "unemployed", "housewife/inactive", "student", "retired"); a subjective indicator of economic difficulties[25] (juxtaposing those with difficulties and those without); and the education of the respondent's parents (grouped following the same logic as the respondent's education). Unfortunately, information was unavailable for Italy in regards to the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondent's partner, who was living apart.

In a subsequent analysis, we focus on people who are currently experiencing a LAT relationship. Again, through a logit regression model, we contrast those who are in a LAT relationship by choice with those who are in a LAT relationship by constraint net of a similar set of confounders. In this case, we could also control our estimates for the distance between the partners' homes (classified into "very short", "short", "long", "very long", and measured in terms of time in France and space in Italy) and for the respondent's intention to cohabit within the next three years (with modalities: "definitely not", "probably not", "probably yes", "definitely yes"). In order to compare France and Italy, we tried both a separate analysis solution and a joint model with an interaction solution.

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[23] In Italian: "*Lei non vive insieme al partner perchè Lei e/o il Suo partner non vuole o perchè le circostanze vi impediscono di vivere insieme?* Né io, né il mio partner vogliamo convivere; Io non voglio convivere; Il mio partner non vuole convivere; Siamo costretti dalle circostanze; Non ci abbiamo mai pensato."

[24] To appreciate the importance of the wording used in the LAT surveying, we can compare two surveys conducted in France. In the French GGS (2005), the estimated number of people (18-79) who declared they were in a "*stable intimate relationship with someone who lives elsewhere*" was around 3,800,000, while in the *Famille et logements* survey (2011), the number of people (18-79) who declared themselves to "*be in a couple with someone who does not live in the household*" was about 1,200,000. Although the wording of the question in the *Famille et Logements* survey is closer to the Italian FSS survey, it was not possible to use it for our comparison because of the lack of information about the characteristics of LAT relationships.

[25] In French: "Pour ce qui est des revenus de votre ménage, vous diriez que vous avez des fins de mois... Très difficile; difficiles; assez difficiles; assez faciles; faciles; très faciles". In Italian: "Con riferimento agli ultimi 12 mesi e tenendo presente le esigenze di tutti i componenti familiari, come sono state le risorse economiche complessive della famiglia? Ottime; Adeguate; Scarse; Insufficienti."

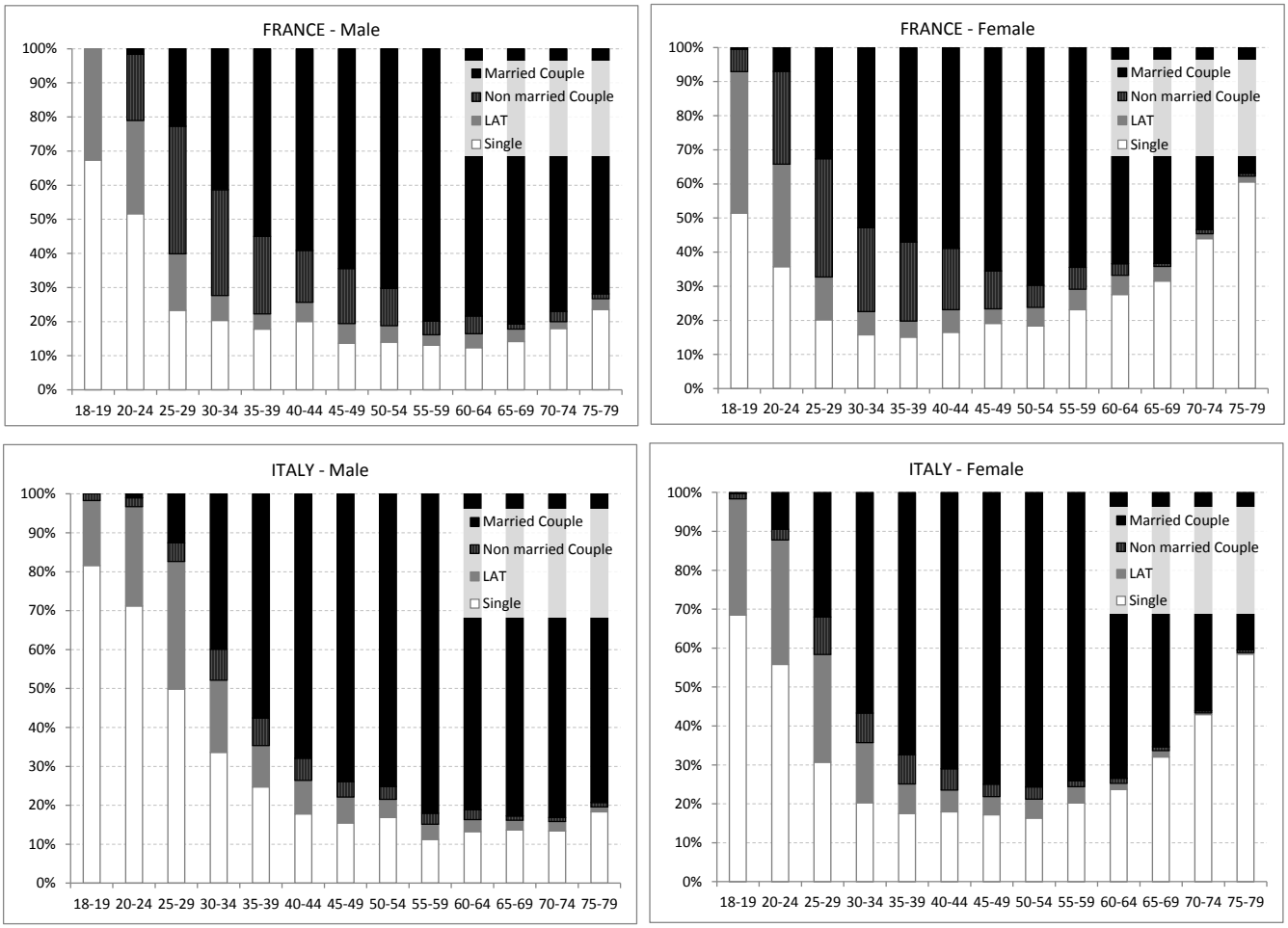
4.5 LAT *versus* living together relationships

4.5.1 Descriptive findings

Overall, the proportion of LAT relationships among people 18-79 years old is very similar in Italy (10%) and France (9%), despite the more restrictive definition in Italy. Importantly, the proportion of LAT relationships of those individuals who are not living together with their partner is about 27% and 26%, respectively, in France and Italy. Figure 1 shows the women's and men's partnership status by age groups in France and Italy. In both countries, the proportion of people living alone or in a LAT relationship decreases with age, up to about 30 years, reflecting the progressive entry into a co-resident couple. The proportion of single men at a given age is consistently higher than the proportion of single women up to the age of 30, because of the age-specific difference between partners (on average, women form unions at younger ages). After the age of thirty, women are more frequently single. This is essentially attributable to two reasons. First, repartnering is less common for women than for men (Ivanova *et al*. 2013). Second, beginning in the Sixties, the proportion of singleness among women in fact started to increase with age, due to the gender-specific gap in life expectancy (women live longer than men).

Beyond these similarities, France and Italy are opposed in terms of partnership arrangements. Among people aged 18-79 living in cohabiting couples, 22% of French are not married versus only 6% of Italians. Consensual unions can no longer be considered in France to be a marginal phenomenon or a transitional form of relationship (Toulemon 1996), and marriage is no longer a prerequisite for the arrival of a child –56% of births now occur outside marriage in France (Insee 2012) versus 24% in Italy (Istat 2012). In Italy, the proportion of unmarried cohabiting couples is also non-negligible among the young, but the phenomenon remains marginal compared to France. For instance, 46% of French aged 25-34 living in a couple are not married, while this is the case for less than a quarter of Italians (17%).

Figure 1. Partnership status by sex and age group in France and Italy



Source: France, Ined-Insee, Erfi-GGS1, 2005; Italy, ISTAT, Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali, 2009
Sample: Individuals aged 18-79

At the same time, the transition to adulthood of young Italians is much slower than that of their French counterparts (in 2005, 13% of French lived with their parents at ages 25-29 *versus* 60% of Italians). Consistently, the proportion of LAT among all couples is markedly higher in Italy among young adults. For instance, at ages 25-29, 51% of Italians are in a LAT relationship compared to only 19% of French. Thus, the absence of consensual unions in Italy is partly offset by a higher proportion of LAT relationships. This view is consistent with the conceptualization of LAT as a modern variant of a dating arrangement. After the age of 50, the proportion of LAT among all relationships is higher in France – e.g., although small, the proportion is twice that of France compared to Italy at ages 60-69, and three times higher at ages 70-79. This is especially true for women after the age of 60, with a proportion that is nearly four times higher in France than in Italy. The interpretation of these figures is not straightforward, because of the less restrictive definition of LAT in France ("intimate relationship" *versus* "couple relationship" in Italy). However, such macroscopic differences

cannot be attributed only to the different definition of being in a LAT relationship, and we can assume that after separation or widowhood, having a new romantic relationship without living with one's partner is better accepted and thus more common in France than in Italy. This result questions the idea that the diffusion and institutionalization of cohabitation is a prerequisite to the emergence of LAT relationships in modern societies. Our results suggest that being in a LAT relationship partly "compensates" the social stigmas associated with living together without being married, which remains popular in Italy (Vignoli and Salvini 2014).

4.4.2 Multivariate findings

Clearly, not only age and sex are related to partnership status, but other factors may influence the likelihood of being in a LAT. Thus, we estimated a logit model predicting the probability of being in a LAT relationship versus being in a co-resident union (either cohabitation or marriage). Three models are presented (Table 2). *Model 1* takes into account gender, age, father's education and a subjective indicator of economic difficulties. All other things being equal, age remains a significant predictor of LAT, but with some differences between countries. Compared to ages 35-39, the likelihood of being in a LAT relationship is higher for younger people. However, no significant difference was recorded in France after ages 35-39; while in Italy the probability of being in a LAT relationship decreases steadily with age. Interestingly, Italian women have a lower likelihood of being in a LAT relationship than men. This finding may reflect gender-specific differences in the surveying of LAT. In Italy, women and men indeed may have varying views on what constitutes being in a "*couple with someone who lives elsewhere*" (women and men may systematically differ in their definition, as suggested in other studies, e.g., Haskey 2005). No significant difference is found in France.

Beyond demographic factors, we observe a similar effect of subjective economic difficulties in France and Italy – the higher the economic difficulties, the higher the likelihood of being in an intimate relationship without sharing the same dwelling. Financial autonomy is a key factor in accessing an independent home and thus moving in with the partner. There is also a marked effect of the respondent's educational qualification, with LAT relationships seeming to be more common among the higher educated. This result seems to be in line with the narrative of the SDT theory, where higher educated individuals are seen as pioneers in the diffusion of "new" family arrangements.

The inclusion of age in *Model 1* does not allow us to insert other important variables because of collinearity problems (e.g., age is evidently collinear with being a student or living with parents). Hence, *Model 2* includes the same variables as *Model 1,* except for age, and it additionally includes marital status, number of children and respondent's employment status. Previous results are generally confirmed, but the effect of education no longer plays a role in France, all other things being equal. The role of education in France is thus likely to be mediated by the respondent's employment status. The new variables included in *Model 2* have a similar effect in both countries. Firstly, the likelihood of being in a LAT relationship is higher for people who experienced divorce or widowhood. Without refusing to repartner, widowers will not like to impose their new partner on the family, in order to maintain a good relationship with relatives and preserve the memory of the deceased spouse (Caradec1997). A similar explanation can be advanced for divorcees, especially when they have children with their ex-spouse/partner: Levin (2004) found that the responsibility and care for children still living at home is one of the reasons behind LAT. Moreover, after a separation, some people wish to keep independence and avoid falling into habits they associate with their previous relationship (Haskey and Lewis 2006). As expected, having children is strongly associated with co-residence (parents are less likely to be in a LAT relationship)[26]. Indeed, the stability of the couple, often identified by several years of co-residence, remains a precondition to entering parenthood (Régnier-LoilierandSebille2015).

Furthermore, our outcomes suggest that there is a higher likelihood of being in a LAT relationship when individuals experience economic difficulties. This is likely to be reflected by the respondent's occupational status. Individuals with temporary contracts – especially those who are unemployed – have a significantly higher likelihood of having a non-resident partner when compared with their counterparts who possess a job with a permanent contract. Students are also more likely to experience a LAT relationship, again reiterating the importance of having a stable economic situation before moving in together. This finding seems to be in line with the narrative of the POD and, thus, maintains a more "continuist" perspective on the meaning of LAT relationships. Interestingly, we note that living or not living with parents (*Model 3*) fully mediates the effect of unemployment and a fixed-term contract. Indeed, economic instability is intertwined with the difficulties in accessing an independent home. As stated at the beginning of the paper, the housing regime is not easy in

[26] Here, it would have been useful to control also for the partner's number of children. This information is not collected for Italian LAT, however.

either France or Italy. More and more often, individuals remain or come back to live with their parents, a situation which partly conflicts with a co-resident partnership.

Table 2. Logit model predicting the probability of being in LAT versus in a co-resident relationship in France and Italy

		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		France	Italy	France	Italy	France	Italy
Intercept		-3.18 ***	-2.17 ***	-0.60 ***	0.79 ***	-1.29 ***	-0.32 **
GENDER	Male (ref)						
	Female	-0.12 -	-0.57 ***	-0.07 -	-0.21 ***	-0.06 -	-0.14 *
AGE	18-19	5.47 ***	5.04 ***				
	20-24	2.80 ***	3.45 ***				
	25-29	1.27 ***	2.08 ***				
	30-34	0.42 **	0.83 ***				
	35-39 (ref)						
	40-44	0.37 *	-0.27 ***				
	45-49	0.14 -	-0.47 ***				
	50-54	0.26 -	-0.63 ***				
	55-59	0.15 -	-0.79 ***				
	60-64	0.23 -	-1.29 ***				
	65-69	0.16 -	-1.31 ***				
	70-74	-0.60 -	-1.62 ***				
	75-79	-0.02 -	-2.03 ***				
MARITAL STATUS	Single (ref)						
	Married			-3.09 ***	-3.93 ***	-3.18 ***	-3.37 ***
	Divorced			1.13 ***	0.59 ***	1.19 ***	1.12 ***
	Widowed			2.04 ***	1.73 ***	2.12 ***	2.35 ***
HAVING EVER HAD A CHILD	No (ref)						
	Yes			-1.72 ***	-1.83 ***	-1.32 ***	-1.41 ***
FATHER'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	Low	-0.11 -	-0.24 ***	0.05 -	-0.03 -	0.12 -	0.07 -
	Medium (ref)						
	High	0.24 -	0.39 ***	0.19 -	0.10 -	0.20 -	0.26 -
	Don't known	0.07 -		0.03 -		0.08 -	
RESPONDENT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	Low (ref)						
	Medium	0.42 ***	0.62 ***	0.03 -	0.52 ***	0.13 -	0.41 ***
	High	0.50 ***	0.94 ***	-0.15 -	0.69 ***	0.35 **	0.79 ***
OCCUPATIONAL STATUS	Permanent contract (ref)						
	Fixed-term contract			0.61 ***	0.32 **	0.19 -	0.17 -
	Unemployed			0.76 ***	0.67 ***	0.31 *	0.11 -
	Inactive			0.49 ***	-0.53 ***	0.54 ***	-0.60 ***
	Student			1.91 ***	2.09 ***	0.97 ***	0.77 ***
FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES	Easy (ref)						
	Difficult	0.34 ***	0.25 ***	0.19 *	0.22 ***	0.43 ***	0.22 ***
LIVING WITH PARENTS	No (ref)						
	Yes					3.97 ***	2.93 ***
N	LAT	1033	3270	1033	3270	1033	3270
	Cohabiting couple	6088	21117	6088	21117	6088	21117

Source: France, Ined-Insee, Erfi-GGS1, 2005; Italy, ISTAT, Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali, 2009
Sample: Individuals aged 18-79 living in a co-resident couple or in a LAT relationship
Interpretation: a positive (resp. negative) and statistically significant coefficient indicates a factor which increases (resp. decreases) the probability of being in a LAT relationship, all other things being equal. The stronger the coefficient (positive or negative), the greater the factor's influence on that probability.
Statistical significance: *: 10%, **: 5%, ***: 1%, -: non-significant

4.6 LAT by choice or constraint?

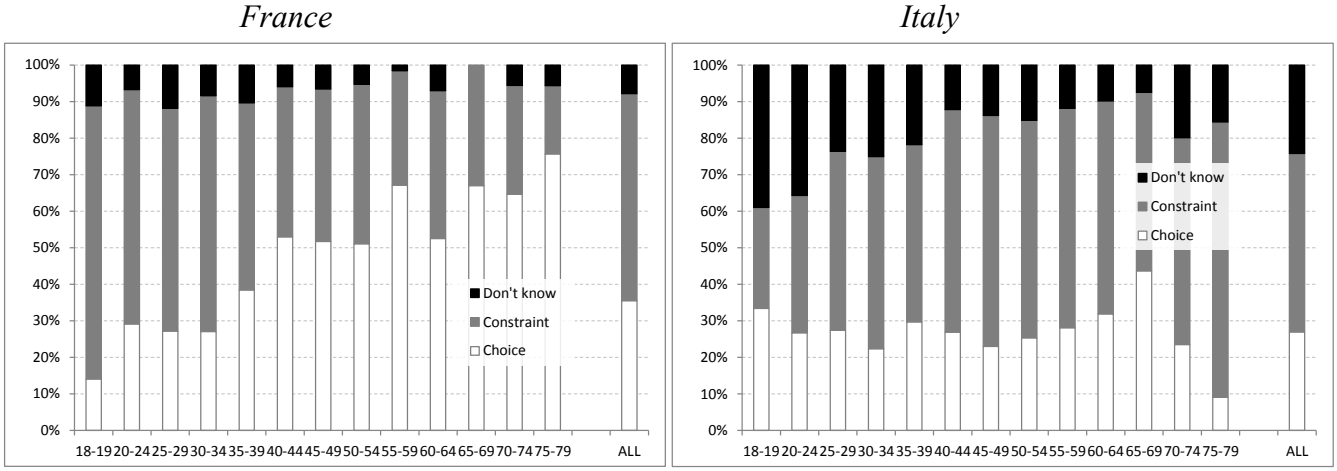
4.6.1 Descriptive findings

Not living with the partner may be due to a *constraint*, but it can also be the result of a conscious *choice* (temporary or permanent). To make inferences about the nature of LAT relationships, individuals were asked if they lived apart because they wanted to or because circumstances prevented them from living together[27]. A conception of LAT as a deliberately chosen form of living arrangement is in line with the SDT perspective. We note that LAT relationships appear to be more often a choice in France (36%) than in Italy (28%). The distribution by age groups reveals a meaningful difference between countries (Figure2). In France, being in a LAT relationship seems to be the result of a choice, especially at older ages: while 30% of people aged 20-24 declare that LAT is a choice, this proportion increases up to 53% for those aged 50-54, and reaches 65% for those aged 70-74. On the other hand, there is no clear-cut pattern by age in Italy, with the exception of the modality "*I've never asked myself this question*", which is more popular among the young. Before the age of twenty-five, more than a third of Italians fall into this category. For a large majority of young adults, their relationship is quite recent and, at this stage, most of them have never seriously thought about the possibility of moving in together.

In France, LAT unions by choice are strongly linked to the length of the relationship (see Figure 3): less than a third of short-term relationships (i.e., couples who are together for less than four years) are chosen, while more than two-thirds of ongoing relationships lasting at least 10 years are by "choice". This agrees with a recent study carried out in Canada, in which Martin Turcotte (2013) observed the same correlations as in France, which occur between age or duration of relationships and the proportion of LAT unions by choice. Surprisingly, there is no influence on the length of relationship in Italy. This difference between France and Italy shows what appears to be an Italian specificity.

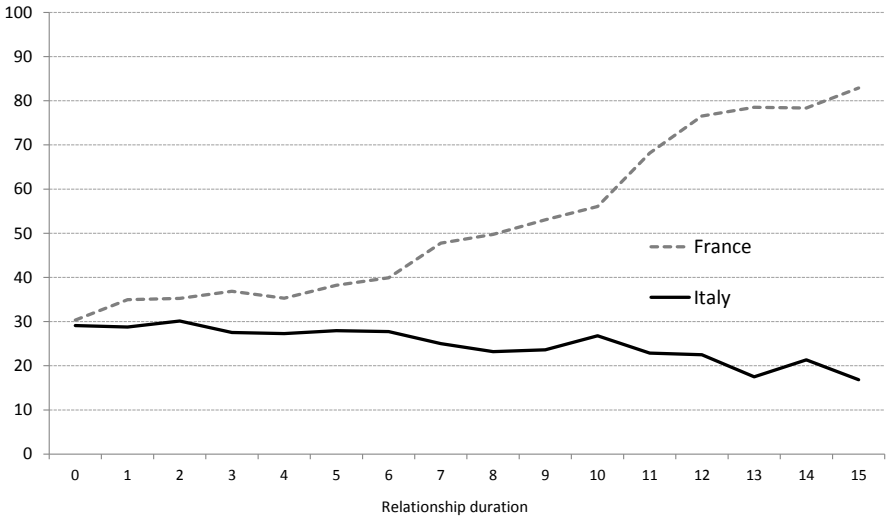
[27] The France-Italy comparison is not straightforward in this context because of the inclusion of a distinct modality in the Italian survey ("*I've never asked myself this question*").

Figure 2. *Reason for living apart by age group in France and Italy*



Note: The "don't know" category in Italy also includes the answer "*I've* never *asked myself this question*."
Source: France, Ined-Insee, Erfi-GGS1, 2005; Italy, ISTAT, Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali, 2009
Sample: Individuals aged 18-79 in a LAT relationship

Figure 3. Percentage of LAT "by choice" according to the relationship duration in France and Italy



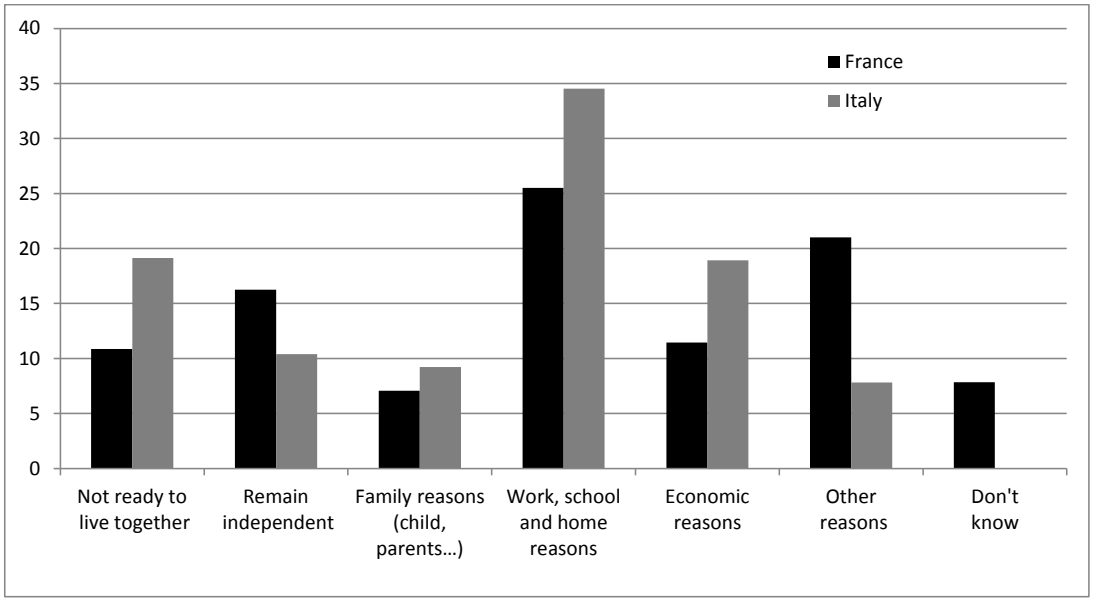
Source: France, Ined-Insee, Erfi-GGS1, 2005; Italy, ISTAT, Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali, 2009
Sample: Individuals aged 18-79 in a LAT relationship

Similarly, in France we observe a strong correlation between living with parents and the reason behind a LAT relationship. While a quarter (23%) of individuals who live with their parents define their relationship as a choice, the same case applies to one of every two (47%) who are living alone. On the other hand, there is no correlation in Italy in this respect: in both cases, 27% of LAT relationships are defined as a choice.

The differences between France and Italy can be addressed by also looking at the reasons given by people to explain their LAT status (Figure 4). For instance, the proportion of

people who indicated that they wish to "keep independence" is higher in France than in Italy: 17% *versus* 10%. Conversely, economic reasons are more frequently advocated in Italy: 35% of Italians cite education-, work-, or housing-related reasons (compared to 25% of French), and 18% cite financial circumstances (compared to 12% of French)[28].

Figure 4. Detailed reasons to explain non-resident partnership in France and Italy



Source: France, Ined-Insee, Erfi-GGS1, 2005; Italy, ISTAT, Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali, 2009
Sample: Individuals aged 18-79 in a LAT relationship

4.6.2 Multivariate findings

These descriptive findings lead us to model the likelihood of being in a LAT relationship by "choice" *versus* "constraint" (Table 3), especially in light of their residential status (living or not living with parents) and economic situation (occupational status and financial difficulties). In the multivariate framework, three models were estimated: one for each country (*Model 1* and *Model 2*), and a third one including France and Italy together, with the country as a control variable (*Model3*). The latter model has been replicated with the addition of an interaction between each variable and the country of residence, in order to bring into play country-specific differences in the effects (*Model4*). For this fourth model, only the significance level of the estimated interactions is shown in Table2.

All other things being equal, *Model 3*confirms the lower likelihood of being in a LAT relationship by choice in Italy compared to France. The direction and the significance of some

[28] We do not describe in depth the reasons for not living together, because of their relative imprecision. As stated by Duncan *et al.* (2013a), several reasons can often explain simultaneously why people are in a non-cohabiting relationship. In addition, the same situation can be seen by someone as a constraint and by someone else as a choice.

factors associated with being in a LAT relationship by "choice" are similar in the two countries. The intention to not live with the partner within the next three years correlates with a higher probability of being in a LAT relationship by choice, especially in Italy. Similarly, living far or very far from the partner is chosen less often in association with a LAT relationship, with a greater effect in France; and living near the partner correlates with a lower likelihood of being in a LAT relationship by choice, but only in Italy. Overall, this result corroborates the view that LAT relationships in Italy tend to be confined to the early phases of the life course, when young couples who live relatively nearby wait to move in together (and probably to marry), because they are confronted with difficult employment and housing situations, as well as with general social pressure to marry. The subjective perception of economic difficulties has no effect, neither in France nor in Italy; but the likelihood of being in a LAT relationship by choice is weaker for individuals working with a fixed-term contract than for those with a permanent job. A similar effect of educational level appears in both countries (but it is not significant in France, probably due to a smaller sample size than in Italy): the higher educated see their LAT situation more frequently as a choice.

Table 3. Logit model predicting the probability of being in LAT "by choice" versus for another reason in France and Italy

		France	Italy	France and Italy : results from the model without interaction	Model France and Italy with interaction between the country (ref=France) and all variables : significance of the interaction
Intercept		0,11 -	-0,53 ***	-0,24 -	
GENDER	Male (ref)				
	Female	0,07 -	0,12 -	0,13 *	-
MARITAL STATUS	Single (ref)				
	Married	-0,11 -	-1,33 ***	-1,07 ***	**
	Divorced	0,68 **	0,08 -	0,17 -	*
	Widowed	0,95 **	-0,38 -	-0,13 -	**
HAVING EVER HAD A CHILD	No (ref)				
	Yes	-0,28 -	-0,28 *	-0,21 -	-
RESPONDENT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	Low (ref)				
	Medium	-0,20 -	0,16 -	0,10 -	-
	High	0,27 -	0,31 **	0,33 ***	-
OCCUPATIONAL STATUS	Permanent contract (ref)				
	Fixed-term contract	-0,48 *	-0,29 *	-0,37 **	-
	Unemployed	-0,11 -	0,16 -	0,13 -	-
	Inactive, retired	0,11 -	0,30 *	0,33 **	-
	Student	-0,38 -	-0,03 -	-0,17 -	-
FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES	Easy (ref)				
	Difficult	-0,04 -	-0,06 -	-0,01 -	-
LIVING WITH PARENTS	No (ref)				
	Yes	-0,77 ***	-0,09 -	-0,20 **	***
TIME (France) DISTANCE (Italy) TO REACH THE PARTNER'S HOUSE	Very short	-0,01 -	-0,30 **	-0,26 **	-
	Short (Ref)				
	Long	-0,42 **	-0,62 ***	-0,55 ***	-
	Very Long	-1,83 ***	-0,99 ***	-1,15 ***	**
RELATIONSHIP DURATION (continue)		0,01 -	0,00 -	0,00 -	-
INTENTION TO LIVE WITH PARTNER IN THE FUTURE (Italy) NEXT 3 YEARS (France)	No	0,81 ***	1,83 ***	1,45 ***	***
	Probably Not	0,78 ***	0,65 ***	0,67 ***	-
	Probably Yes (Ref)				
	Yes	-0,79 ***	-0,81 ***	-0,80 ***	-
COUNTRY	France (ref)				
	Italy			-0,23 ***	
n	Choice	421	892	1313	1313
	Other reason	612	2378	2990	2990

Source: France, Ined-Insee, Erfi-GGS1, 2005; Italy, ISTAT, Famiglia e Soggetti Sociali, 2009
Sample: Individuals aged 18-79 in a LAT relationship
Interpretation and statistical significance: see Table 2.

Other characteristics related to the family situation do not have the same effects in France and Italy. In France, widowed and divorced people see their LAT relationship as a choice more often than singles do, while no difference was found for Italy. Conversely, married Italians are less likely to be in a LAT relationship by choice than single people; this difference was not recorded in France. Having children appears to decrease the likelihood of being in a LAT relationship by choice, but the effect is modest. This finding is not surprising if we refer to the analysis of Duncan *et al*. (2013a). The authors showed that the same reason,

including having children, could be both perceived as a choice ("*I prefer to live apart in order to not disturb my children*") or a constraint ("*because of my children, I can't live with my partner*"). Last, *ceteris paribus*, there is a strong effect of people's residential status in France; namely, those living with their parents have a much lower probability of considering their LAT relationship as a choice. The lack of effect already observed in Italy with the descriptive analysis is confirmed in the multivariate framework.

4.7 Conclusions

This paper aimed to increase our understanding of LAT relationships, a union type that has only recently begun to gain attention from social observers. Our intent in this paper was essentially exploratory, but at least three findings clearly emerged from our France-Italy comparative study. First, although it is usually taken for granted that "single" in residential terms means "without a partner" in relationship terms, we showed that this assumption is incorrect in about 27% of cases in France and 26% in Italy. Thus, apart from their scientific relevance, it is important to consider LAT as an additional form of living arrangement in order to avoid meaningless classifications of family living arrangements. We hope that family surveys will systematically include questions to identify LAT relationships in the years to come, and that they will ideally also include specific questions to distinguish LAT individuals from those in more casual or fleeting relationships (see, for instance, Haskey 2005).

Second, despite the fact that the prevalence of LAT relationships is practically the same in France and Italy, their nature seems to differ profoundly between the two societies. In Italy, LAT relationships are essentially relegated to the early phases of the life course, among young couples who wait to move in together and marry. This situation seems to be relatively stable over time, because the findings agree with the work of Billari et al (2008), who analyzed data that was 10 years older than ours. In addition, over recent years, these young couples have also been increasingly confronted with adverse employment and housing situations. The absence of the legal recognition of civil unions combined with familial and social pressure to marry further contribute to leaving little room for cohabitation and, therefore, to facilitating the diffusion of LAT as an alternative to marriage among young adults. From this perspective, LAT relationships in Italy do not differ much from old-fashioned dating arrangement. The Italian situation is similar to the Spanish one (see Castro-Martín et al. 2008): The great majority of LAT relationships are formed by young individuals aged 25-29 still living in the parental home (among women,

83% in Italy and 91% in Spain), while this is the case for only one-third of their French counterparts. LAT relationships in France seem to be much more the result of a conscious choice, especially in the older phases of the life course.

Hence, we note that LAT relationships are occurring both in settings in which cohabitation is institutionalized, such as in France, as well as in settings where cohabitation is relatively uncommon, such as Italy (but also Spain: Castro-Martín et al. 2008). We conclude that high levels of cohabitation do not appear as a prerequisite for the occurrence of LAT unions, but when cohabitation is not yet diffused and institutionalized, LAT couples experience this form of union at younger ages, and often as a result of a constraint.

Third, we found traces of both the SDT and the POD narratives in our findings. The difficult housing and labor market conditions faced by the young, especially in Italy, suggests that the POD perspective represents a possible explanation beyond the prevalence of LAT throughout the early phases of the life course. The positive and significant effect of fixed-term contracts on the probability of being in a LAT relationship can be interpreted as a symptom of POD. At the same time, however, we showed that being in a LAT relationship by choice is more popular among individuals who in the last decades have always anticipated family developments in Western societies: the better-off or, in terms of an SDT interpretation, the forerunners of new family behaviors. This interpretation seems to apply particularly to the French context. We therefore question an interpretation of LAT relationships solely made in light of a "continuist" perspective. The examination of the French case further suggests that being in a LAT by choice represents the result of a conscious choice made especially at older ages.

Some limitations in our study need to be addressed. First, we relied on a slightly different wording in the question used to identify a LAT relationship. In Italy, the word "couple" was included in the definition, while in France, we referred to "stable intimate relationships". As a consequence, although the proportion of LAT obtained in France and Italy is more or less the same, we probably underestimate their prevalence in Italy. To be sure, in any quantitative research it is also a difficult – if not impossible – task to grasp what "being in a couple" means exactly in different contexts. Secondly, the French and Italian surveys do not always offer the same information. For instance, in Italy we have no information on the characteristics of the non-co-resident's partner. This is a usual drawback in comparative-oriented research: We need to stick to what the data actually provide us.

Despite these limitations, we believe that this analysis raises important questions about family change in post-industrial societies. Even if the trend toward ''new family forms''

comes to a halt, a return to a traditional family model is in fact unlikely. Thus, focusing on the emergence of new (potential) family typologies such as LAT relationships in order to understand their meaning is increasingly important. We found that for young Italians a LAT relationship appears as a natural arrangement for "being intimate", when they might face difficulties in entering the housing and labor market and, at the same time, are confronted with the (still) low social acceptance of cohabitation. Italian LAT cannot be considered as a new, long-lasting family form of living arrangement, such as cohabitation. Indeed, as mentioned by Guibert-Lantoine et al. (1994), non-cohabiting conjugality differs from cohabitation in at least two aspects: it is less often voluntary and does not appear as "anti-establishment". As a consequence, a LAT relationship in Italy is linked with the postponement of co-residence between partners, which in turn also contributes to a delay in having the first child, and ultimately to very low Italian fertility. Despite similar incidences of LAT in France, they are not of the same nature as in Italy. LAT relationships in France seem to be much more the result of a conscious choice, and they possibly do constitute an emergent, new and different way of "being intimate", especially at older ages. This group is demographically and sociologically important and deserves attention.

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5 Is the diffusion of cohabitation a precondition for the emergence of LAT?

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Since the second half of the twentieth century, family forms have become more diverse everywhere in Europe. The decreasing propensity to marry and have children, the increasing tendency to postpone marriage and childbearing, and the general decline in the centrality of marriage in many societies have led to the formation of very different types of living arrangements. The traditional family model—i.e., a household consisting of a couple and their children—has been replaced by a range of family constellations. Living as a family in Europe today means living longer in smaller (with fewer siblings), often more deinstitutionalized (non-marital) and non-co-resident families (Hantrais 2006), in which the kinship networks have become ‘‘tall and lean.’’ Despite these pronounced changes in family structures, most studies on family life conducted over the past few decades have focused on the traditional family, and have not considered alternative family structures. In this context, the attention of social researchers have been increasingly attracted by Living Apart Together (LAT) relationships – i.e., intimate relationships between two persons who reside in different households (Casper et al. 2008; Haskey and Lewis 2006; Levin 2004; Duncan and Phillips 2010).

The proponents of the Second Demographic Transition (SDT) posit that a modernized society, open to social and cultural changes, allows couples and individuals to develop personal lifestyles and to prioritize individualism and self-realization (Laesthaege, 1995; Van de Kaa, 2001). As a corollary, the diffusion of very different type of living arrangements is predicted for the years to come.

Conceiving LAT relationships as a choice based on a desire for greater independence and freedom means viewing the diffusion of LAT as a phenomenon that develops hand in hand with the spread of new family behaviors such as cohabitation, marital disruption, or singleness.

European cross-national studies on the LAT do reveal that, similar to the initial spread of unmarried cohabitation (Kiernan 2004), LAT partnerships are currently more prevalent in Northern and Western Europe than in Eastern Europe (Liefbroer et al. 2012; Sánchez and

Goldani 2012). This may be linked to the level of diffusion and institutionalization of "new" family arrangements. In particular, Irene Levin (2004) suggested that "[C]ohabitation, as a socially accepted institution, was a prerequisite for the establishment of LAT relationships" (p. 238).

Religion and religiosity also play a key role in shaping the diffusion of new family patterns. Catholic principles thus dictate a sharp transition from the family of origin to the family of procreation, which leaves little (or no) space for cohabitation. Hence, following the SDT perspective, the diffusion of LAT should be accompanied by the process of secularization.

Other authors, however, suggest a more "continuist" interpretation of LAT unions, maintaining that a LAT is just a stage of the well-established route from single to married/cohabiting status (Haskey, 2005; Haskey and Lewis, 2006; Ermisch and Seidler, 2009). In this perspective, there is nothing new in LAT unions.

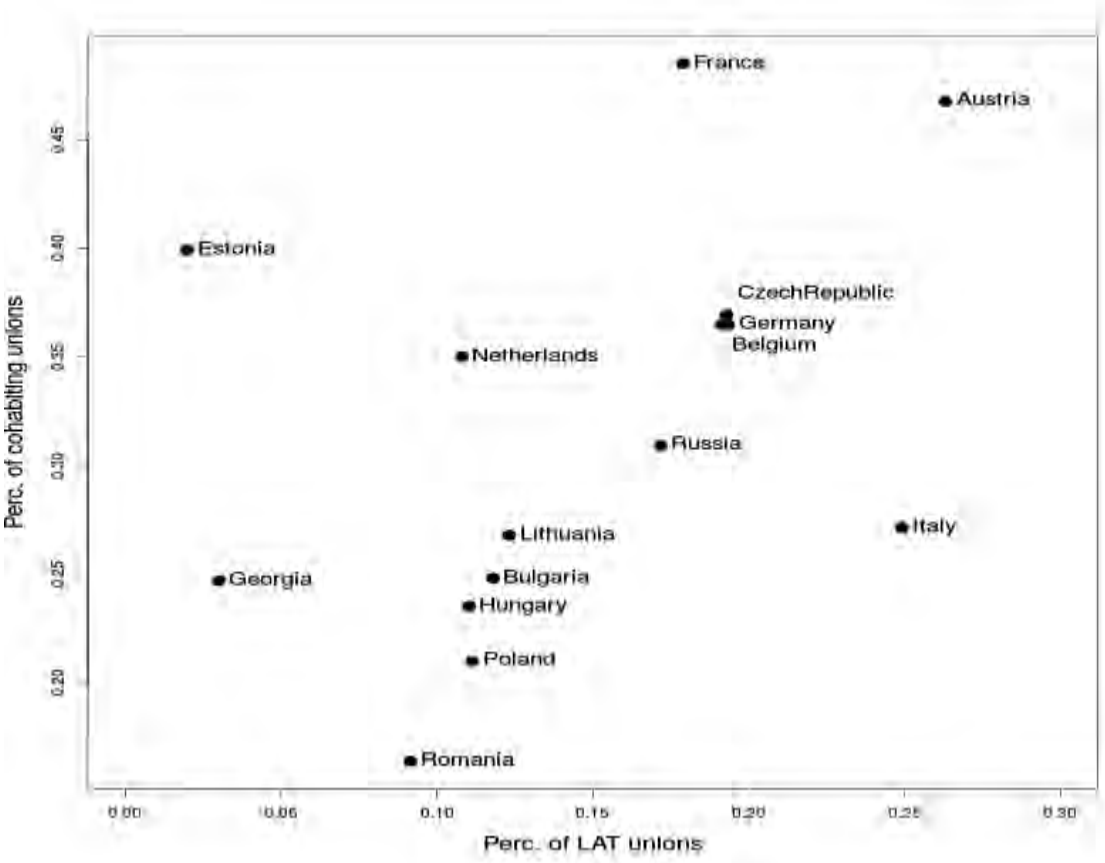
In this research brief, we explore the prevalence of LAT in relation with other "new" family patterns across European societies. Is the spread of "new" family arrangements, such as cohabitation, a prerequisite for the emergence of LAT relationships? And, is the pattern uniform across countries? Or, instead, are LAT more prevalent in more secular societies?

Data from the first wave of the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS hereafter) is used to implement such analysis. For a long time, surveys only considered a tripartite model of intimate relationships in which individuals are classified as "single", "cohabiting" or "married". Unlike many other surveys, the GGS provides data for both women and men and specifically inspects the presence of LAT relationships, acknowledging that being "single" in residential terms is not necessarily a synonym of being "without a partner" in relationship terms . In addition, GGS data provides several information on the characteristics of LAT and covers a relevant number of European countries, allowing for cross-country comparison . We use the first wave of the GGS of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Georgia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, and Russia, as well as the Hungarian Survey ''Turning Point of the Life Course'', the 2003 Italian Multipurpose Household Survey on ''Family and Social Subjects'', and the ''Netherlands Kinship Panel Study''. The latter three surveys incorporate large parts of the GGS and are part of the Generations and Gender Program Here we use the harmonized GGS dataset but we can't check exactly if the formulation of the question was exactly the same in all countries because questionnaire are not re-translated in English. This might be a limitations of the study presented here, in case some relevant difference on questionnaire wording affect the results.

5.1 LAT prevalence and country characteristics: A description

Whether LAT is a new family form stemming from increasing individualistic values brought about by SDT or just a stage of the transition from singleness to marriage or cohabitation is still debated in literature. Figure 1 reports the scatterplot of prevalences of LAT and cohabiting unions (with respect to all unions), only for the 18-45 age group. This age limitation is imposed by Austrian GGS sample, which is made up of individual of that age group only. In appendix the same scatterplot is reported for all age groups (excluding, of course, Austria). The plot shows there is a strong correlation between LAT and cohabiting unions, even though some countries do not perfectly comply to this correlation. In Italy, for instance, despite of a relatively low diffusion of cohabiting unions there is the second highest prevalence of LAT (Austria has the highest) while in France, where we notice the highest percentage of cohabiting unions, the prevalence of LAT is below those of several countries and in Estonia LAT are almost non-existing though a high prevalence of cohabitation. Thus this graph, on the one hand tells us that, on average, LAT is more common in countries where cohabitation is more accepted, but, on the other, it shows several exception to this rule, making us suspect that the motivation leading to live apart together can be very diverse. Other scatterplots are reported in appendix showing the correlation between LAT prevalence and other indicators (Total divorce rate, attendance to religious function, female labour force participation and youth unemployment rate), although from these plots a less clear pattern emerges.

Figure 1: Prevalence of LAT and cohabiting unions among population aged 18-45.



Source: Generations and Gender Survey (1st wave)

At the risk of oversimplifying, we can classify countries into three groups with "high" (above 20%), "medium" (between 15% and 20%), "low" (below 15%) LAT prevalence. Then we will compare the characteristics of these three groups in terms of family formation and dissolution (Age at leaving home, total divorce rate, childlessness, cohabitation), labour market (female participation to labour force, youth unemployment), and LAT characteristics (average union duration, intentions to cohabit, whether LAT is a choice).

The results are reported in Table 1. For Estonia we do not report figures on LAT characteristics because the number of LAT unions is particularly small and any statistic calculated would be not affordable..

The figures seem to confirm that addressing LAT unions merely as an expression of Second Demographic Transition is too simplistic: The two countries with the highest LAT prevalence (Austria and Italy) are very different in terms of diffusion of SDT related behaviors: Italy has very low cohabitation and total divorce rates, whereas Austria the same figures are particularly high for Austria. Similarly, moving to low LAT prevalence countries,

we find that Poland and Netherlands, although they are well-known to be almost at the opposite ends of the spectrum of SDT diffusion.

Table 1: High, medium and low LAT prevalence countries and their family, labour market and LAT characteristics.

	Average LAT duration (GGS, 2004-05)	% willing to cohabit (GGS, 2004-05)	% stating LAT is a choice (GGS, 2004-05)	% youth (18-35) in parental home (GGS, 2004-05)	Total divorce rate (Eurostat, 1999, except Italy and Russis 1994)	% Childless women (Eurostat at, cohort 1964, except France, 1959 and Georgia, 1949)	% Cohabitation (GGS, 2004-05)	Youth unempl. rate (males) Eurostat, 2007	Female Labour Force particip. Eurostat, 2007
High LAT prevalence (above 20%) countries									
Austria	2.9	34.3	39.9	45.7	0.40	17.3	46.7	8.3	67.4
Italy	4.1	36.6	27.1	50.2	0.08	20.1	17.0	18.2	50.6
Medium LAT prevalence (above 15%) countries									
Belgium	2.5	39.3	33.3	58.1	0.19	--	22.1	20.9	60.6
Czech Republic	--	–	--	39.2	0.32	7.1	24.4	10.6	11.0
France	2.3	44.9	28.4	39.5	0.39	9.9	30.1	18.9	65.5
Germany	2.7	28.1	51.8	71.9	0. 39	12.3	22.3	12.2	70.0
Russia	3.0	22.5	31.8	56.5	0.51	--	22.5	--	--
Low LAT prevalence (below 15%) countries									
Bulgaria	3,2	18,9	44,7	59.0	0,19	4,3	14,4	14,5	62,3
Hungary	–	31,3	–	27,2	0,39	9,6	14,4	17,6	54,9
Lithuania	2,5	13,9	49,9	43,65	0,39	8,6	18,6	7,0	65,0
Netherlands	3,0	79,5	--	10,8	0,37	18.0	21,9	5,6	72,3
Poland	–	35,2	53,3	45,6	0,16	15,2	11,4	20,0	23,8
Romania	2,8	21,1	49.0	50,2	0,21	12,3	10,8	21,1	56,1
Georgia	--	--	--	32.7	–	10,4	15,5	–	--
Estonia	--	--	--	–	0,49	--	25,3	12,1	7,1

Looking at the other country characteristics, we might hypothesize that LAT prevalence is also affected by other contextual factors. For instance, we can see that Italy has a much higher youth unemployment rate than Austria. Therefore we could argue that in Italy many LAT unions are forced by unfavorable economic circumstances. However this explanation does not apply for Poland, where youth unemployment rate is also high, but does not lead to high LAT prevalence. Incidentally, similarly to Italy, in Poland cohabitation is still very rare (Hoem et al. 2010) and not perceived as a popular form of living arrangement (Perelli-Harris et al. 2014).

5.2 Abridged conclusions

This research brief aimed to increase our understanding of LAT relationships. Our goal was to describe the degree of association between family forms and prevalence of LAT adopting a comparative cross-country approach. A descriptive study is a necessary first step; future efforts should be directed at deeply testing the associations evoked in this cross-sectional research.

Our outcomes provided us with useful input, demonstrating the complexity of the link between the prevalence of LAT in conjunction with other "new" family- related behaviors. They cannot be reconciled with any notion of a simple, uniform, and unidirectional relationship between LAT prevalence and standard interpretations. We note that LAT relationships are occurring both in settings in which cohabitation is institutionalized, such as in Austria or France, as well as in settings where cohabitation is relatively uncommon, such as Italy (or Spain: see Castro-Martín et al. 2008 for the examination of the Spanish case).

We conclude that high levels of cohabitation do not necessarily appear as a prerequisite for the occurrence of LAT unions, but when cohabitation is not yet diffused and institutionalized, LAT couples experience this form of union at younger ages, and often as a result of a constraint. Nevertheless, our results do provide support for the SDT narrative: as "new" family patterns, such as cohabitation, get diffused and institutionalized also the prevalence of LAT relation- ships is not-negligible.

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Appendix

Figure A1: Prevalence of LAT unions (age 18-45) and attendance to religious functions

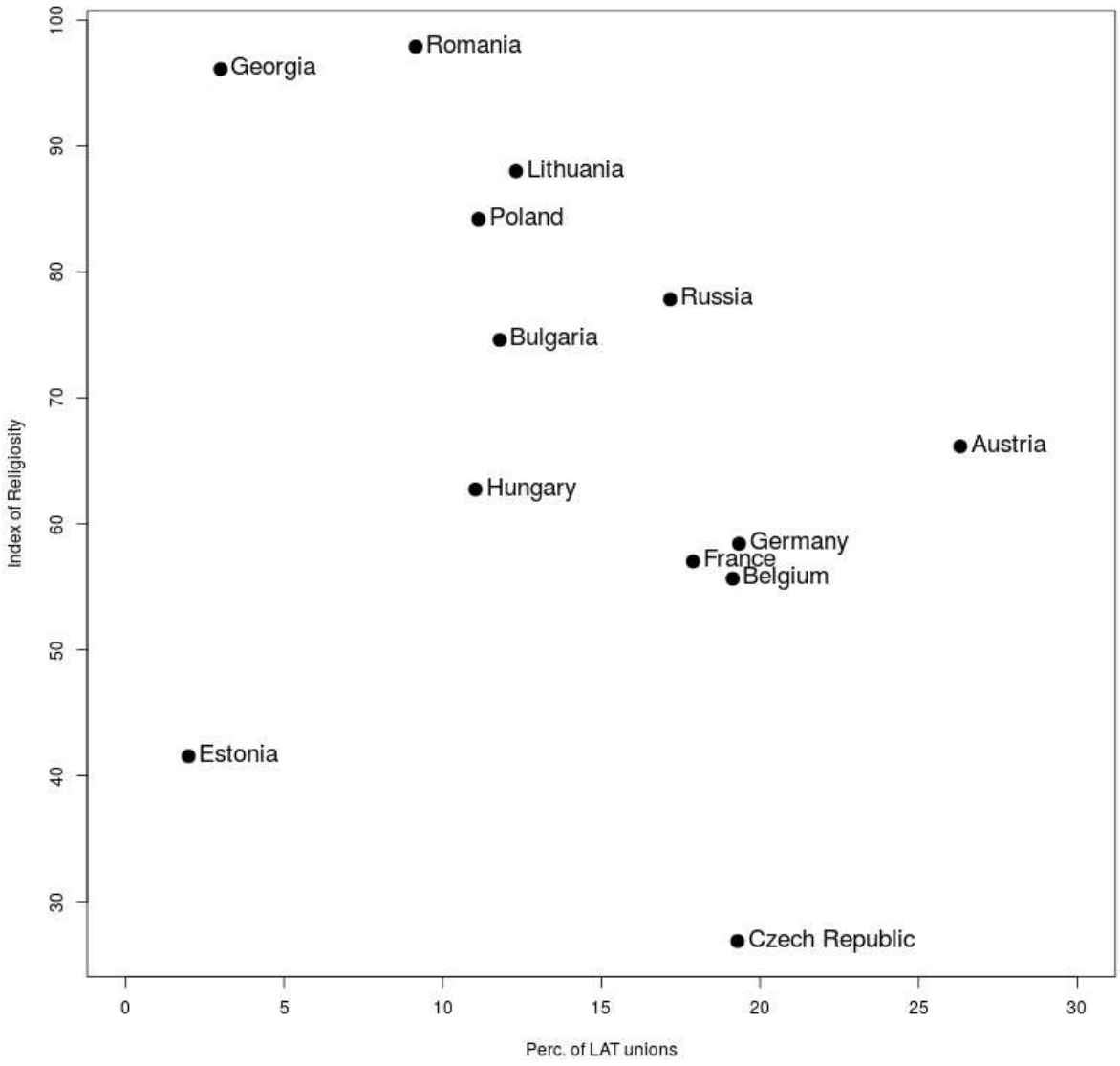


Figure A2: LAT prevalence (18-45) and Youth unemployment rate

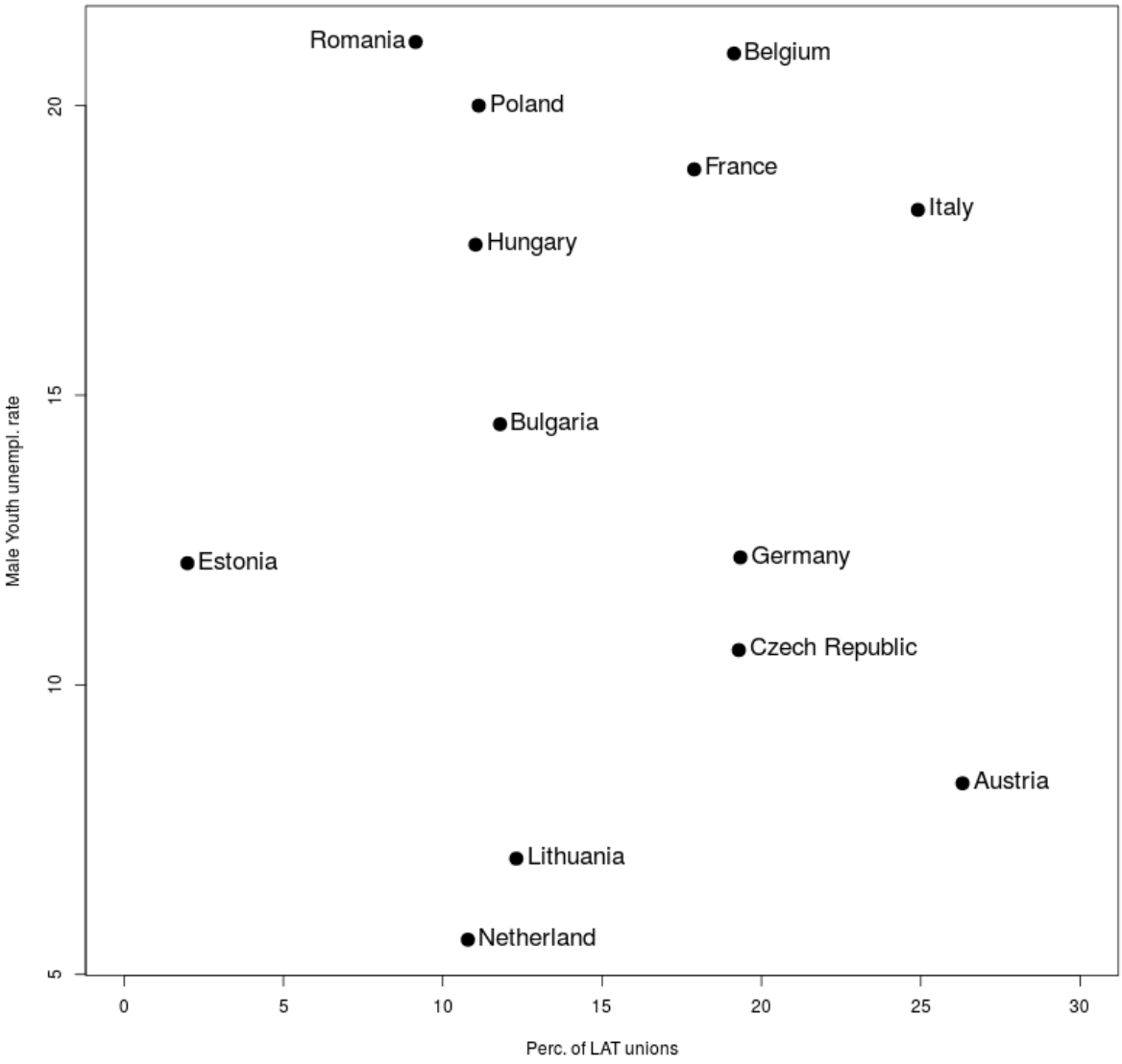


Figure A3: LAT prevalence (18-45) and Total Divorce rate.

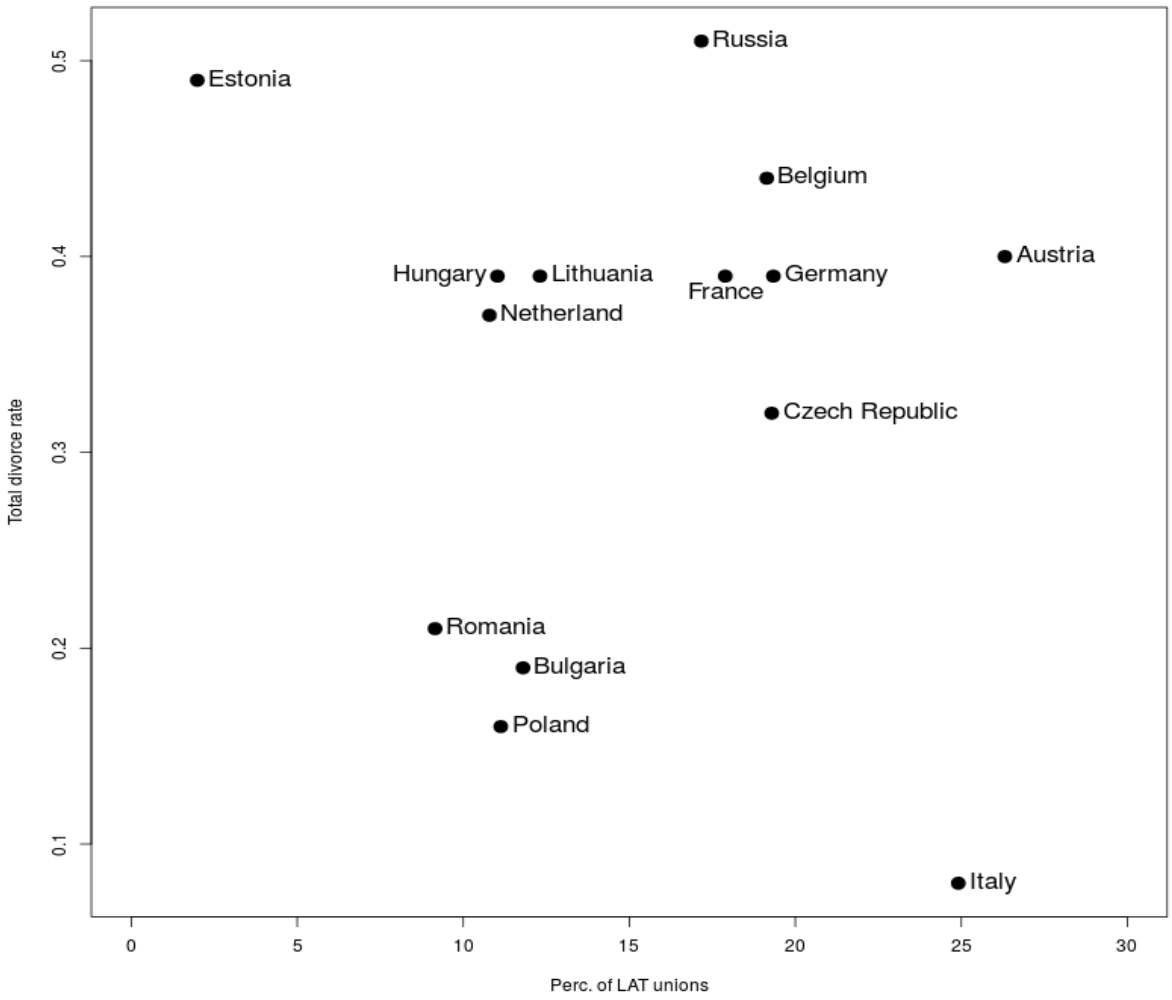


Figure A4: LAT prevalence (18-45) and female labour force participation.

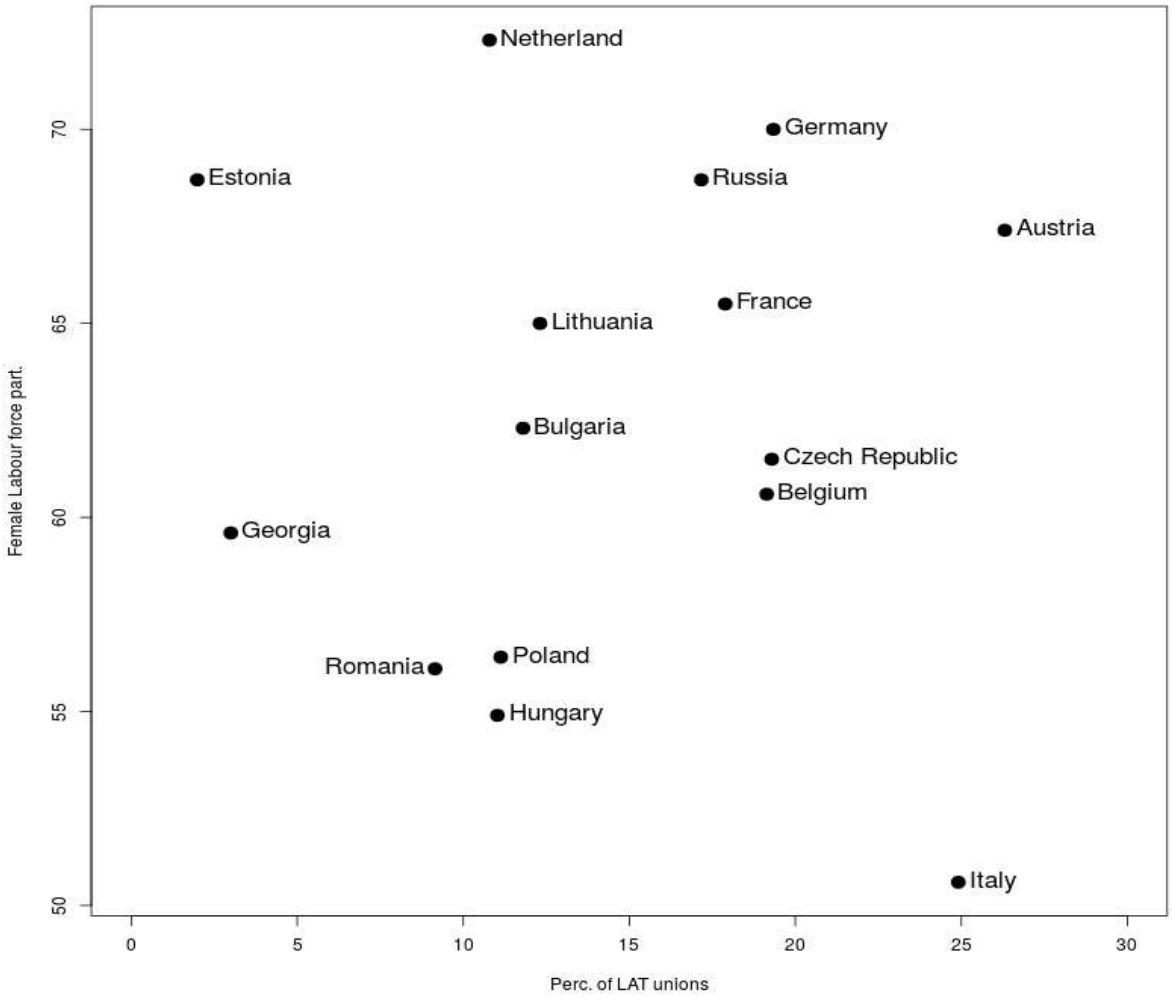
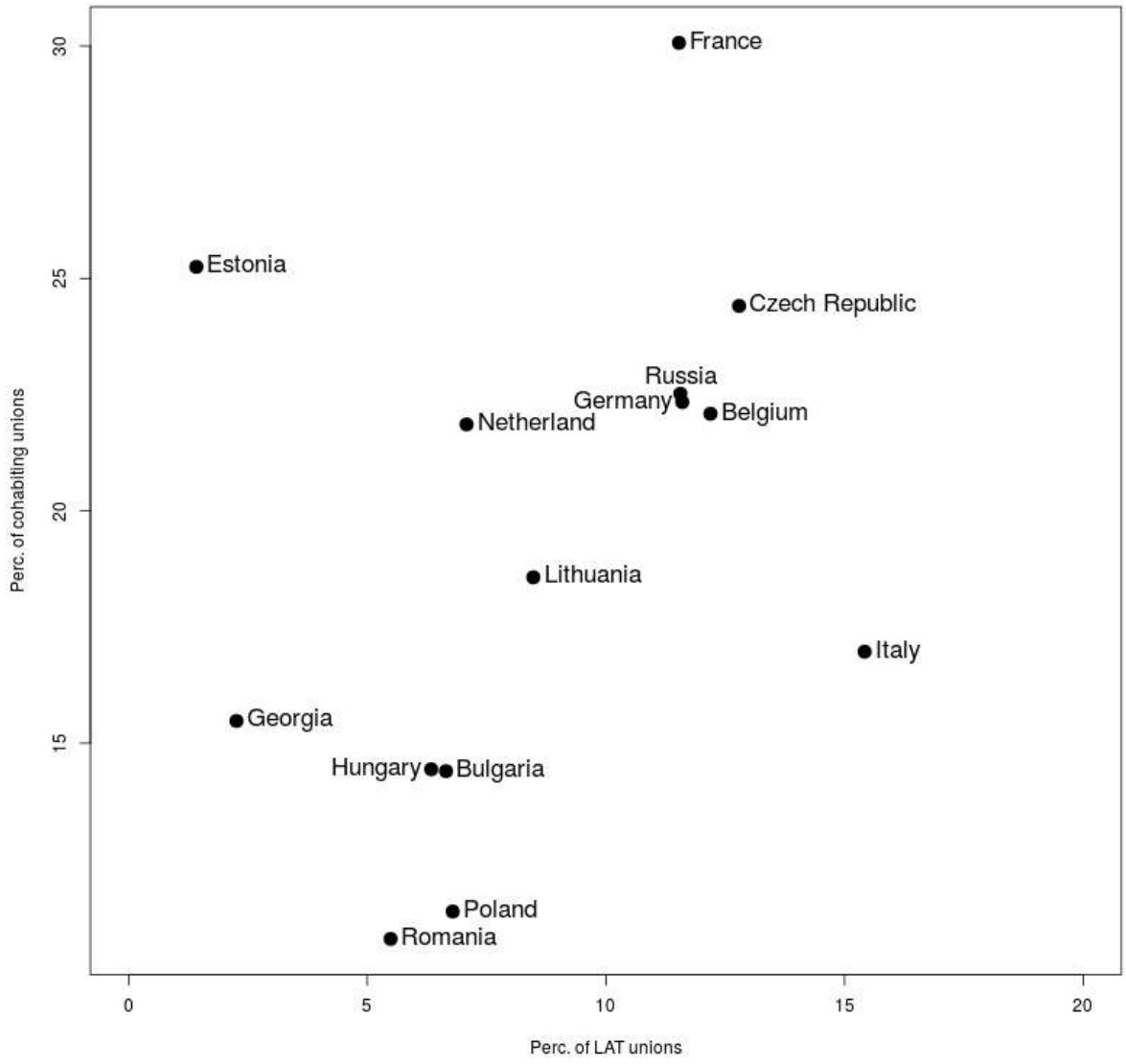


Figure A5: Prevalence of LAT and cohabiting unions among population aged 18-79.



Source: Generations and Gender Survey (1st wave)