
Does past young singlehood act upon the current division of housework? Evidence from eight European countries

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Factors behind gender differences in time allocation within couple

- **Time availability and spouse comparative advantage**
 - Time spent in paid work and work schedules (Bianchi et al. 2000)
 - Related to spouses' relative resources: level of education or income (Becker, 1981, 1985; Apps & Rees 1997, 2002; Chiappori, 1997; Manser & Brown 1980; Lundberg & Pollak 1994, 1996; Lommerud 1997; Behrman 1997; Shelton & John, 1996)
- **Institutional factors** (Gershuny & Sullivan 2003, Sullivan et al. 2009)
 - Opportunities for outsourcing housework (e.g. substitutes, tax deductions)
 - General organization of time schedules
 - Family-friendly policies
- **Normative determinants** (South and Spitze 1994; Robinson and Milkie 1998; West & Zimmerman 1987; Ferree 1990; Brines 1992, 1994)
 - Norms, especially those related to gender roles
 - Expectations and attitudes about housework

Life course perspective (Elder, 1994)

- Prior life course history impacts later life outcomes
 - Conditions of childhood and early adulthood impact middle and later adulthood
- Life course and division of housework
 - Men's and women's time in housework varies at different life course stages (Anxo et al., 2011)
 - Transitions
 - Cohabitation to marriage (Gupta, 1999; Baxter et al., 2008; Grunow et al, 2012)
 - To first and higher-order births (Baxter et al. 2008, 2014; Kühhirt 2012; Kluwer et al. 2002; Schober 2013; Dominguez-Folgueras et al. 2017)
 - Union to separation (Gupta, 1999)
 - Transition to second union (Beblo & Solaz, 2017)

Research question

- Few studies link early life course events and division of housework
- Leaving the parental home a key stage in the life course (Avery et al. 1992, Marini 1984)
 - Transition from parental home to independent living increases the time spent on housework (Mencarini et al., 2017)
- What is the effect of the effect of independent living on gender division of housework once in partnership?
 - Does living independently before first union formation lead to a more equal sharing of household chores?

2 alternative hypotheses

- **Living alone after leaving parental home = a learning period**
 - Increases the comparative advantages in housework, stronger effect for men
 - Living alone in itself structure norms regarding housework and regarding the appropriate behaviour of wife and husband
 - H1: living independently reduces the gender division of housework, especially for tasks usually performed by opposite sex
- **Self selection hypothesis**
 - Men and women with more traditional attitudes are more likely to directly enter into marriage (or cohabitation) after leaving parental home
 - Those with less traditional attitudes stay alone longer
 - H2: No specific effect of independent living

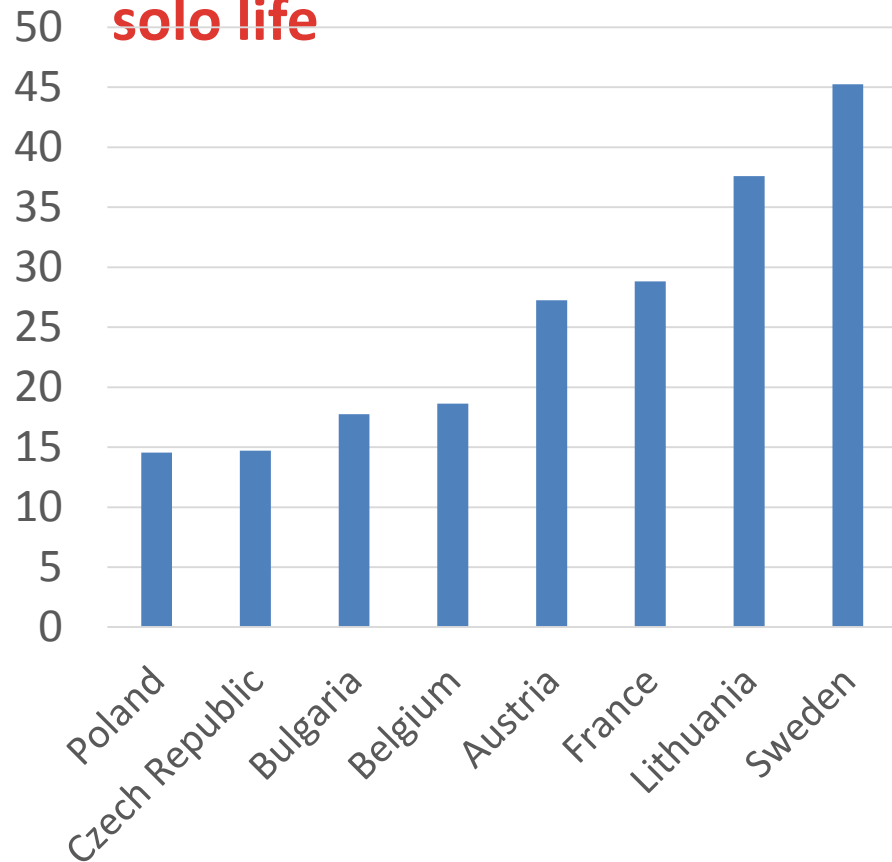
Data and sample

- First wave of the Gender and Generation survey
 - Longitudinal survey on family changes collected on over 200,000 individuals aged 18-79 from 19 countries
- Sample:
 - 8 European countries for which we have identical information on the **distribution of tasks and age at departure and first union**
 - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden
 - Men and women aged from 20 to 50
 - In partnership
 - Not living in parental home
 - Left parental home after 16 years of age
 - 10,192 men 14,640 women

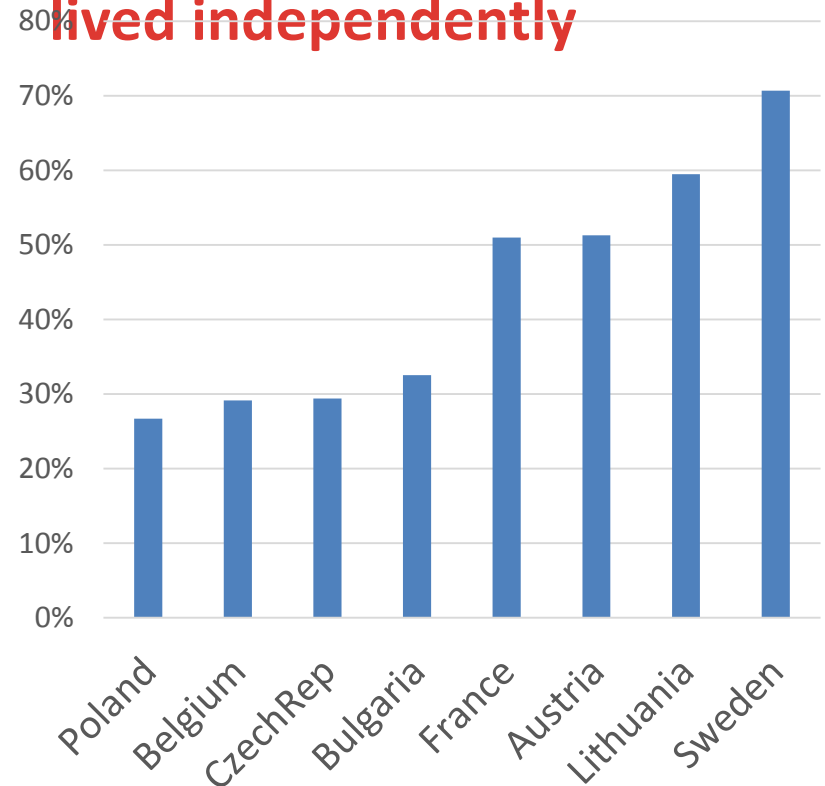
Living independently: period btw parental home departure and first union

Date at first couple formation – Date at living parental home (month, year)

Average number of months of solo life



Share of individuals who lived independently



Measurement of housework division

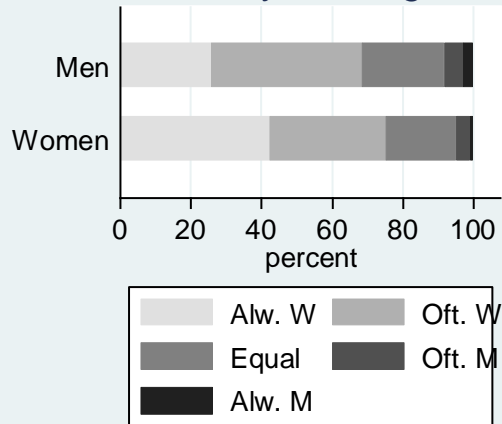
- 6 domestic tasks
 - Preparing daily meals, doing the dishes, shopping for food, cleaning, doing repairs, keeping financial records
- Alternative replies
 - always me
 - usually me
 - me or my partner equally
 - usually my partner
 - always my partner
 - always or usually other people in the household
 - always or usually other people outside the household

Measurement of housework division

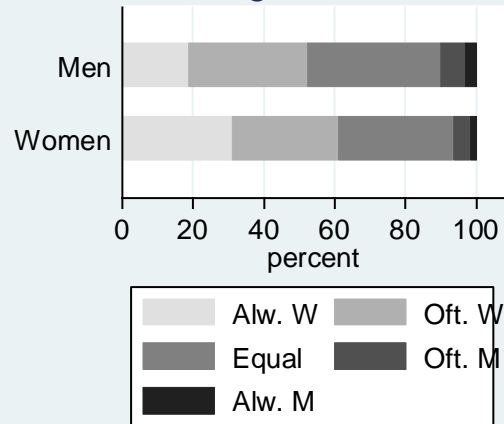
- Each task separately
- Synthetic indicator of women's over-involvement
 - Task always carried out by the woman: + 2
 - The woman usually carried out the task: + 1
 - Distribution equal or if neither partner carried out the task (not applicable, task carried out by another member of the household or by a paid employee): 0
 - The man usually carried it out it -1
 - Task always carried out by the man: - 2

Gender division of tasks

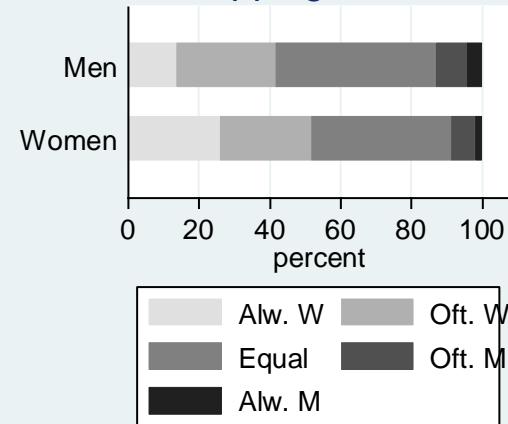
Daily cooking



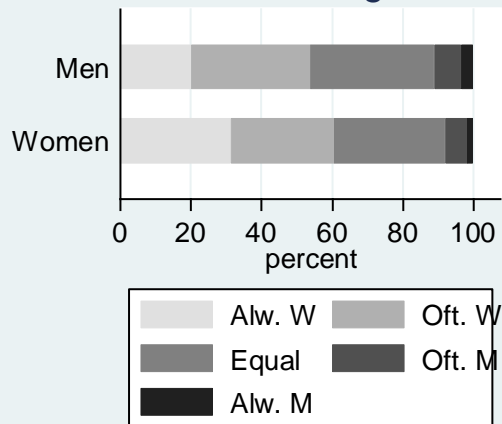
Doing the dishes



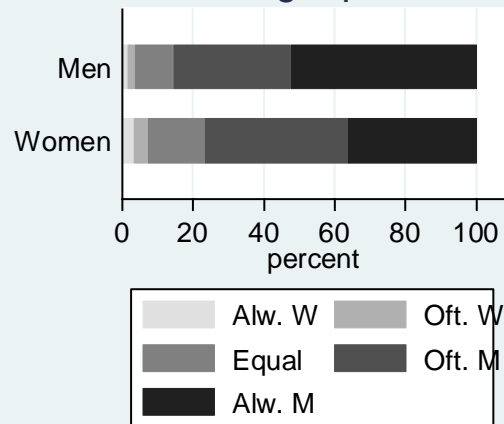
Shopping for food



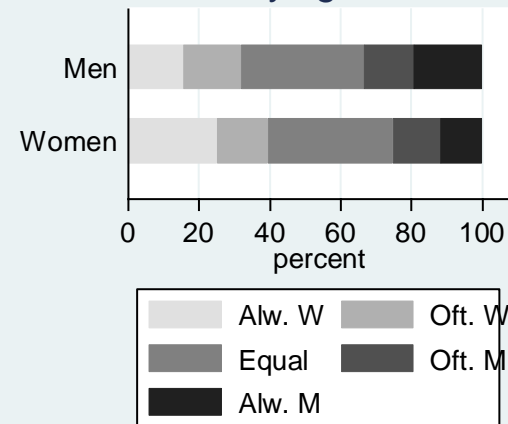
Cleaning



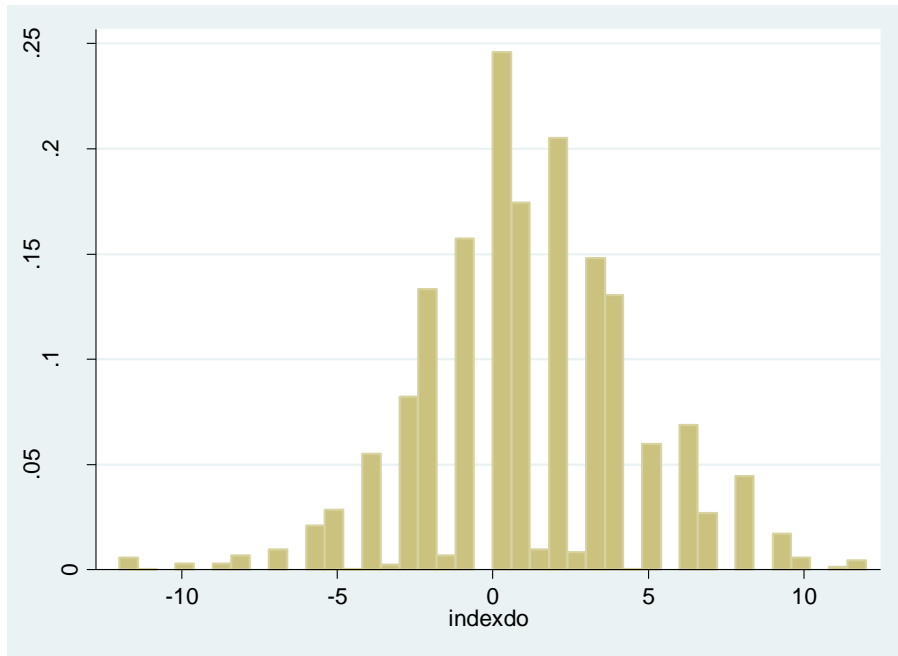
Doing repairs



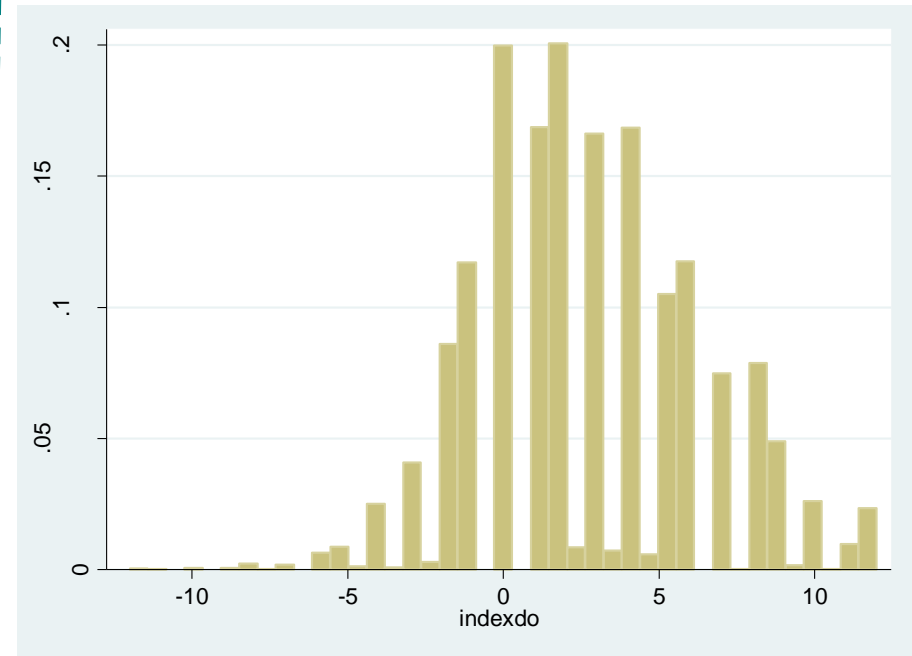
Paying bills



Indicator of woman's over-implication in domestic tasks



Men



Women

- 1: OLS, separately for men and women
 - Dependent variables:
 - Indicator of woman's over-implication
 - Each task separately
 - Interest variables:
 - Specif. 1: Dummy independent living
 - Specif. 2: # of years lived solo
 - Specif. 3: Age at leaving parental home
 - Specif. 4 & 5: 1 & 2 controlled for age at leaving parental home
- 2: IV estimation with, separately for men and women
 - Instruments:
 - Relationship quality with parents at age 15
 - Separation of parents

- Control variables
 - Individual variables: Birth cohort, level of education, # siblings
 - Couple characteristics: union cohort, union duration, first union, married couple, # children, at least one partner immigrant, paid domestic help, HH income
 - Spouses relative position: employment status, education gap, age gap
 - Background: father's education level, mother's education level
 - Country

Results- OLS Men (women's over-implication)



		Index	Cooking	Dishes	Shopping	Cleaning	Repairs	Bills
Model 1	Ever lived alone	-0.330***	-0.098***	-0.082***	-0.064**	-0.035	-0.006	-0.050
Model 2	Years lived on their own	-0.032***	-0.009**	-0.009**	-0.006	-0.003	-0.003	-0.003
Model 3	Age Parental Home leaving	0.015*	0.006**	0.006**	-0.001	0.002	0.004*	-0.003
Model 4	Ever lived alone	-0.353***	-0.096***	-0.075***	-0.091***	-0.036	0.018	-0.083**
	Age Parental Home leaving	-0.005	0.001	0.002	-0.006*	-0.000	0.005*	-0.008*
Model 5	Years lived on their own	-0.031***	-0.007	-0.007*	-0.009**	-0.003	-0.000	-0.007
	Age Parental Home leaving	0.001	0.003	0.003	-0.005	0.001	0.004	-0.006

Results- OLS Women

		Index	Cooking	Dishes	Shopping	Cleaning	Repairs	Bills
Model 1	Ever lived alone	-0.090	-0.044**	-0.058***	-0.022	-0.034	0.044*	0.022
Model 2	Years lived on their own	-0.008	-0.004	-0.007*	-0.002	-0.006	0.007*	0.003
Model 3	Age Parental Home leaving	-0.002	0.003	0.002	0.002	0.003	-0.004	-0.007*
Model 4	Ever lived alone	-0.111	-0.040*	-0.062***	-0.019	-0.031	0.039	0.004
	Age Parental Home leaving	-0.007	0.001	-0.002	0.001	0.001	-0.002	-0.007
Model 5	Years lived on their own	-0.011	-0.003	-0.007*	-0.001	-0.005	0.006	-0.001
	Age Parental Home leaving	-0.005	0.002	-0.001	0.002	0.001	-0.002	-0.007

Results - IV

Men	Index	Cooking	Dishes	Shopping	Cleaning	Repairs	Bills
Ever lived alone	-0.031	-0.551**	-0.044	-0.0897	-0.0557	0.777***	0.356
Years lived on their own	-0.304	-0.168**	-0.059	-0.073	-0.089	0.080	0.156
Age Parental Home leaving	0.046	0.075**	0.019	0.032	0.014	-0.041	-0.072
Women							
Ever lived alone	-0.518	-0.085	-0.181	0.175	-0.182	1.289***	0.100
Years lived on their own	0.070	0.037	-0.115	0.049	-0.038	0.101	0.090
Age Parental Home leaving	-0.067	-0.021	0.040	-0.027	0.019	-0.041	-0.040

Results – First step IV

	Men			Women		
	Ever lived alone	Years lived on their own	Age Parental Home leaving	Ever lived alone	Years lived on their own	Age Parental Home leaving
Break up parents	0.100**	0.318**	-0.493***	0.0759**	0.0865	-0.152*
Poor relationship with parents	0.179***	0.246	-0.733***	0.138***	0.218**	-0.679***

Conclusion and discussion

- The gender division of domestic tasks is lower when men have lived independently
- Mainly a selection effect
- But important to distinguish tasks
 - Men who lived independently have more equal sharing of cooking
 - Living independently changes behaviours: men do more, it increases men's comparative advantages in cooking
 - It changes their attitudes: changes their view regarding men's roles within the family
- For women
 - No effect of having lived independently
 - Higher involvement in male-dominated task (doing repairs)
 - The independence they gained during young adult singlehood does not change their bargaining power within the family

Conclusion and discussion

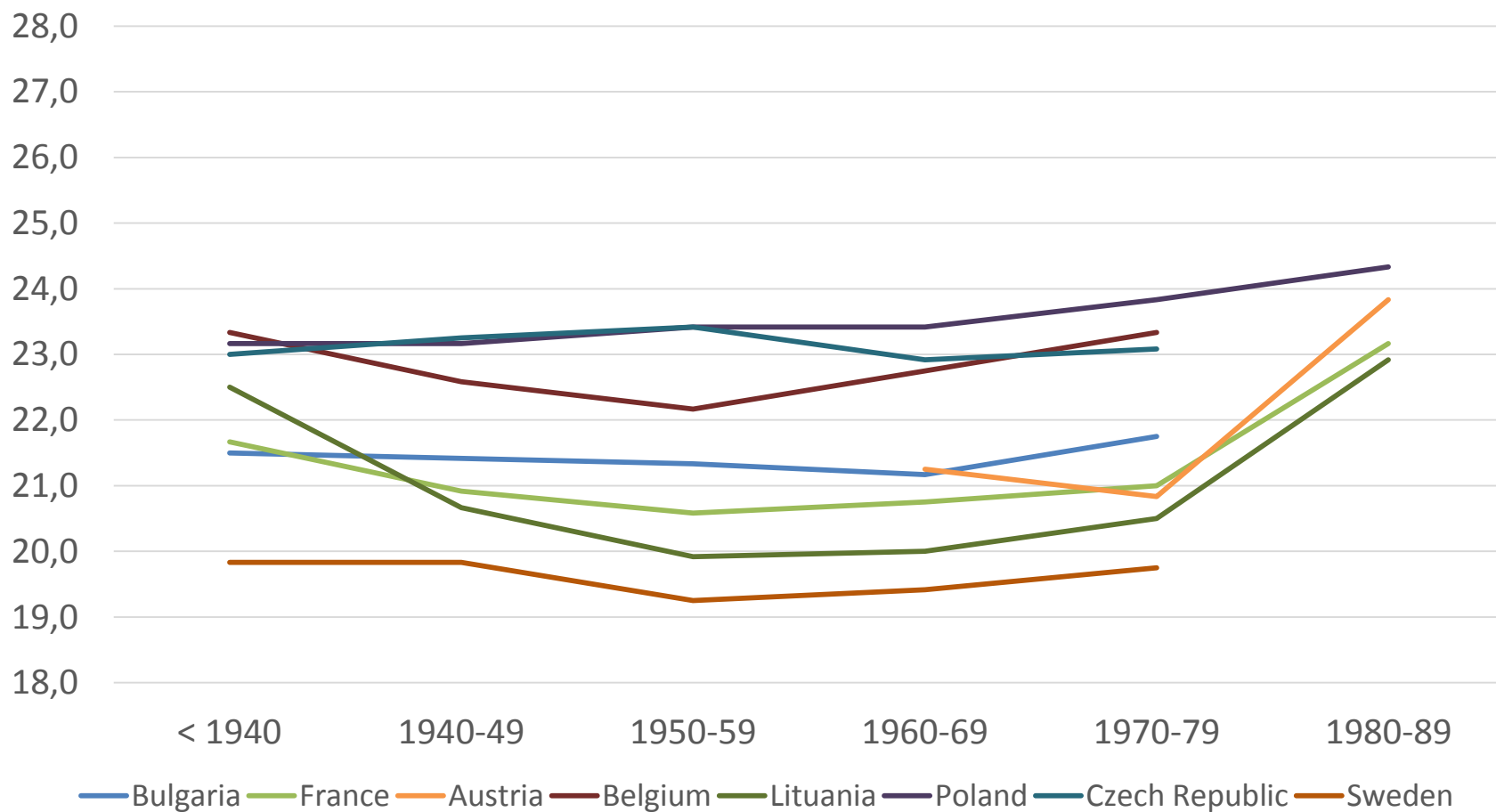
- Robustness checks
 - Sample Aged 30-40
 - First union
 - Controlled for income
- Limitations
 - No information at the couple level (both have lived solo or not)
 - Possible return to parental home not taken into account: duration may be overestimated for younger cohorts
 - No causal analysis: next step: panel dimension of GGP

Thank you for your attention

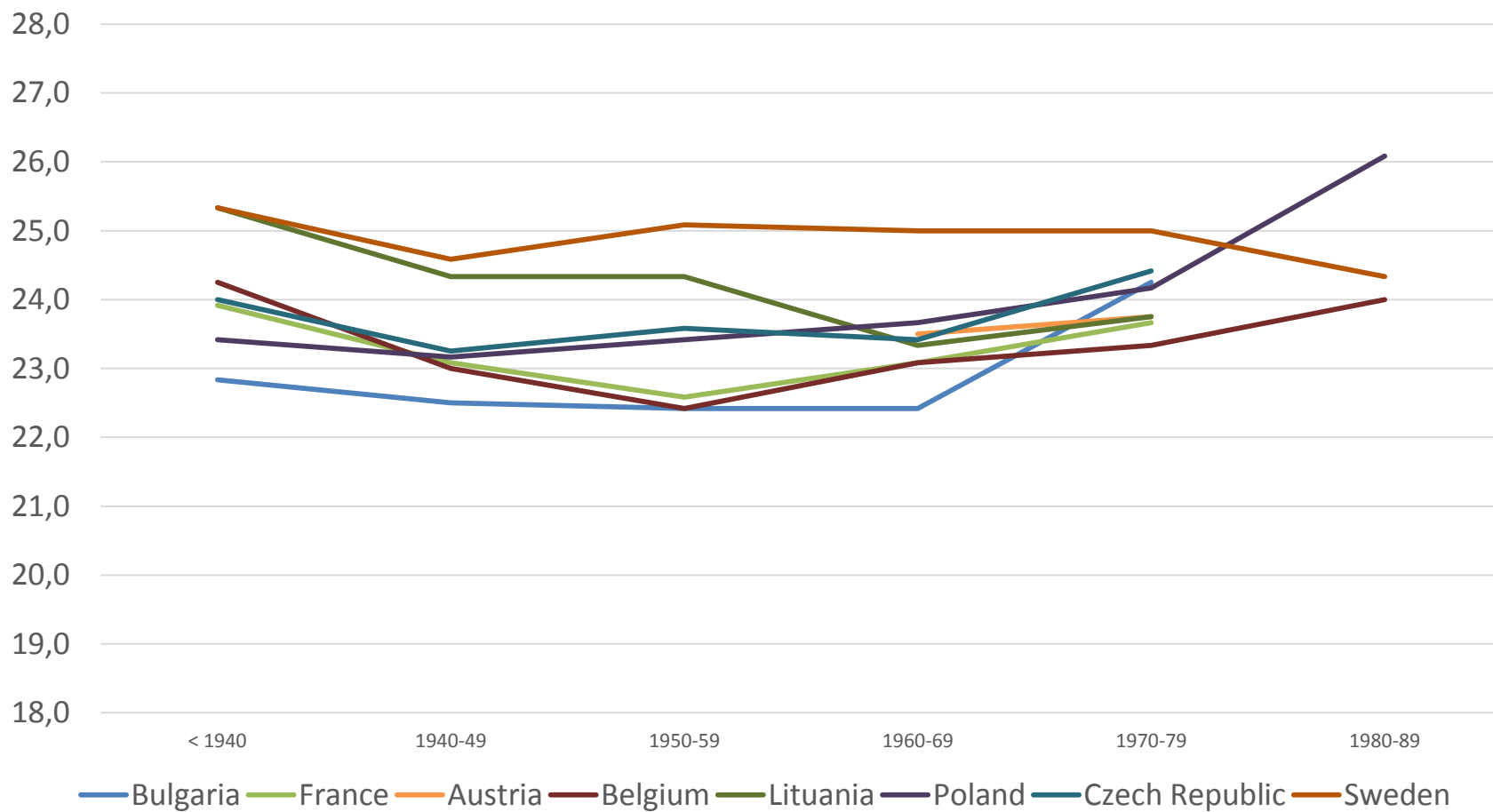
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Median age at leaving parental home, by cohort



Median age at first union



Duration of young adult singlehood

Diagramcím

