What would your parents say? The impact of cohabitation on intergenerational relations in traditional societies.

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Abstract

This article investigates the relationship between nonmarital cohabitation among young people and their relations with parents in the cultural and institutional settings that favour marriage over informal unions. We use data from the recently released Generation and Gender Survey for Poland, a country with limited social acceptance for cohabitation, high attachment to the marriage institution and familialistic culture. Our results show that in a traditional country such as Poland nonmarital cohabitation is selective: these are mainly young people raised in better educated and less religious families living in urban areas who are more likely to choose cohabitation instead of marriage in their first union. Next, we analyse how living arrangement choices are interrelated with the frequency of contacts and satisfaction from relations with parents, as well as chances for receiving material support from family. According to our results, cohabitation may decrease the quality of relations with parents as measured by self-rated satisfaction, but it does not have strong and negative effects on the frequency of meetings with both parents or probability of receiving material support from them.

CONTENTS

I.   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to get more insight into the mechanisms that foster or prevent diffusion of cohabitation in countries with familialistic culture and strong attachment to tradition. The studies carried out so far emphasize that under such specific cultural conditions, cohabitation spreads very slowly (Buchmann & Kriesi, 2011), and the group where it becomes relatively more common is constituted by young people from tertiary educated families (Di Giulio & Rosina, 2007; Rosina & Fraboni, 2004). Better educated families are considered to be more open-minded and less attached to conservative values (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2010), lower educated families in turn represent more conservative attitudes and norms. In societies with familialistic culture, the parental background is argued to be quite important for the choice of living arrangements. Young people anticipate that a choice which clashes with values of parents may deteriorate the mutual relations and lead to reduction of emotional and material support received from family (Di Giulio & Rosina, 2007; Schröder, 2008). In such societies young people tend to avoid the living arrangements that are unacceptable for their relatives, and cohabitation becomes a very selective process. Informal unions are established mostly by those young people, whose family finds it acceptable that a couple lives together without getting married. These arguments seem especially relevant for countries, where cohabitation is not commonly accepted and a strong role of kinship ties is combined with the lack of policies addressing the needs of youth.

Despite interesting theoretical advances in the academic debate on the relationship between diffusion of cohabitation among young people and the quality of intergenerational relations, the empirical evidence in this field the remains undeveloped. The available studies confirm that cohabitation spreads among young people from better educated families (Di Giulio & Rosina, 2007; Gabrielli & Hoem, 2010; Rosina & Fraboni, 2004). However, these studies concentrate on one single country – specifically, on Italy. We would like to see whether analogous empirical patterns can be observed in other countries that share with Italy similar

cultural and institutional settings. Moreover, in order to understand whether young people indeed consider parental values and attitudes when making decisions on union formation, we need to know whether cohabitation might have a negative impact on intergenerational relations at all. This issue has so far been hardly investigated. One of the few studies by Schröder (2008) provides qualitative evidence on the perceived impact of choices of living arrangements among young people on the quality intergenerational relationships. This study focuses again on Italy, and given a qualitative approach, it's conclusions cannot be generalised for the whole population of young people in traditional societies. Another study on frequency of intergenerational contacts in UK and Italy has been carried out recently by Nazio and Saraceno (2012), but their findings question rather than corroborate the potential impact of cohabitation on mutual relations between parents and their adult children living in informal unions. The only study which seems to confirm that cohabitation may indeed harm relations between adult children and their parents has been conducted by Eggebeen (2005) for US, where cohabiting couples are shown to exchange less support with parents than the married couples. Clearly, more empirical evidence would be helpful for better understanding of the links between partnership choices among young people and the strength of their bonds with parents.

In this paper we would like to contribute to the debate on the relationship between cohabitation and intergenerational relations in traditional societies. We use Generation and Gender Survey (GGS) data for Poland – a country where cohabitation is not commonly accepted due to the strong influence of Catholic religion (Mynarska & Bernardi, 2007) and hence remained a relatively uncommon family arrangement until very recently (Matysiak, 2009). In Polish culture, the kinship ties are very strong and additionally reinforced by limited welfare state support for youth. Our contribution to the literature is twofold. First, we examine whether under such cultural context, choosing cohabitation occurs mainly among young people raised in well-educated families that are not strongly attached to religion and live in less tradition-oriented urban areas. Second, we investigate whether choosing cohabitation may potentially deteriorate the mutual relations between young people and their parents. We revisit the

question on the consequences of cohabitation using econometric techniques which take selectivity of cohabiters into account. Moreover, rather than looking at one dimension of the quality of intergenerational relations, we consider a broader range of measures. We examine the frequency of contacts, the material support received from parents and satisfaction from the quality of relationships with parents.

This paper is structured in the following way. In Section 2 we present the theoretical concepts behind our empirical analyses. In Section 3 we elaborate on the cultural and institutional conditions in Poland. In Section 4 we describe the data and methods that we employed to carry out the analyses, whose results are then presented in Section 5. Final Section 6 provides a summary of the most important the findings from this paper.

II.   THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Most European countries have seen a retreat from marriage and a diffusion of cohabitation, but the diffusion of cohabitation has proceeded with differential pace across Europe (Heuveline & Timberlake, 2004; Kalmijn, 2007; Kiernan, 2004). In more traditional societies which are characterized by familialistic culture, as well as strong attachment to religion, cohabitation remains a relatively less common type of partnerships. One of the possible explanations may be the impact of parental norms and values on the choices of living arrangements of their adult children. It can be argued that as long as most young people are raised in religious and tradition-oriented families, their union formation choices are restricted by parents' norms and attitudes (Huschek et al., 2010; Rosina & Fraboni, 2004). Union choices that clash with the parental values may cause deterioration of relations with parents and lead to weakening of emotional and perhaps also material support that older generation provides for youth (Di Giulio & Rosina, 2007; Nazio & Blossfeld, 2003; Rosina & Fraboni, 2004; Schröder, 2008). Hence, in conservative societies, the tendency to choose cohabitation rather than marriage should emerge mainly among young people with better educated, liberal and less

religious parents.[1] In contrast to this narrow group, most young people could be expected to follow the customary route of union formation, i.e. direct marriage.

While the above argumentation seems quite plausible, there are many other mechanisms that may potentially explain the relatively higher propensity of young people raised in well-educated families to enter informal unions. Parental education proxies a number of factors: not only norms and values, but also preferences and resources, and hence it may affect the choices of living arrangements of adult children in multiple ways (Axinn & Thornton, 1992; Wiik, 2009). For example, parental background may influence some the life course decisions of their adult children through socialization (Peterson & Rollins, 1987) that results in intergenerational transmission of norms and values and may shape adult children's own attitudes towards nonmarital cohabitation (Axinn & Thornton, 1992). Moreover, young people from more traditional families may develop childbearing preferences in response to the parents' preferences for grandchildren, and this might affect their choices between cohabitation and marriage (Barber & Axinn, 1998). These examples show that from theoretical point of view, it is possible to observe a higher propensity for cohabitation among people from better educated, less religious and tradition-oriented families even if parental attitudes as such do not directly affect adult childrens' choices regarding living arrangements. Hence, we need some more detailed evidence on the potential consequences of choices of partnership types. If cohabitation has no negative impact on relations between adult children and their parents, then the mechanism described in the recent literature (Di Giulio & Rosina, 2007; Rosina & Fraboni, 2004; Schröder, 2008) is not necessarily the most relevant explanation for the limited and selective diffusion of cohabitation in traditional societies.

The arguments on the role of parental norms and attitudes for their adult children's union formation choices may be relevant mainly in countries with specific cultural and

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[1] In this paper, we focus on the literature on the impact of parental background on cohabitation rather than on the influence of the individual-level resources on union formation processes. As Wiik (2009) notes, the impact of parental background and the influence of individual education are two quite separate issues both from theoretical and empirical point of view. For the discussion of the individual-level resources in the Polish context, see Mynarska & Matysiak (2010), Matysiak (2009) or Slany (2002).

institutional setting. First of all, we would expect such mechanisms to be at work if the older generations are strongly attached to values and norms that prevent nonmarital cohabitation. Second, parental background may be crucial for youth choices of living arrangements if the attitudes of parents really count for young people. In societies facing an intergenerational conflict, we could expect young people to contest parental values rather than to adjust important life course decisions to the parental expectations. Finally, the culturally maintained role of kinship ties may be additionally reinforced by the limited state support for youth (Buchmann & Kriesi, 2011). In modern societies, transition to adulthood is a complex process involving many steps. Getting access to education, finding a job, establishing one's own household are examples of key life course events that require substantial resources that are not always available to youth. Lack of policies which facilitate reaching residential and financial independence means that young people need parental support. In such countries youth may avoid entering a conflict with their relatives and hence the parental attitudes may matter a lot for the family formation choices of young people.

In the next section we refer to these three crucial dimensions of cultural and institutional settings that moderate the relationship between parental background and choices of living arrangements among youth. We argue that Poland represents a case study of limited social acceptance for cohabitation in older generations, which may be traced down to the strong attachment to the Roman Catholic religion. We provide the evidence for strong kinship ties and remarkable role of intergenerational transfers in this country. We also highlight the role of institutional arrangements, which make Polish youth dependent on the support received from older generation.

III. POLISH CONTEXT

SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE FOR COHABITATION

For many decades, cohabitation has been perceived in Poland as a living arrangement common in the lower social strata and among people with adverse partnership experiences

(Mynarska & Bernardi, 2007). This negative image is strongly related to a limited social approval for informal unions in Poland as compared to other European countries As demonstrated by Vanassche, Swicegood, and Matthijs (2012), Poland belongs to the group of countries with relatively high disapproval for alternative family types such as cohabitation and remarkable attachment to the institution of marriage. The proportion of people who would accept a situation that a couple lives together without intending to get married amounts to about 61% in Poland (see Figure 1). This indicates that currently cohabitation in Poland is not completely condemned by the vast majority of the society. Nevertheless, there is a large proportion of people who do not approve it. The limited social acceptance for informal unions and high value of marriage may be largely ascribed to the impact of the Roman Catholic religion. According to data from ISSP 2008, over 90% of Poles were raised in the Catholic religion compared with an average of 49% in other European countries. Catholic religion considers a living in non-marital relationship as a sin and social attitudes towards family formation patterns are largely interlinked with this Catholic dogma.

While in general the social acceptance for cohabitation is lower in Poland than in other European countries, it has been gradually increasing, partly because the younger generations tend to have more positive attitudes towards such living arrangements (Mynarska & Bernardi, 2007). Apart from the age divide in the social acceptance for cohabitation, education attainment is another important dimension of heterogeneity in attitudes towards nonmarital unions. Better educated individuals, who are usually also more open-minded and liberal, are more likely to accept cohabitation (Kwak, 1996), which is also consistent with pattern observed in other countries (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007).

THE ROLE OF KINSHIP TIES

Societies with strong family ties are characterized by cultural patterns of family loyalties and authorities (Reher, 1998) that are reflected in intense intergenerational exchange of transfers of material or non-material support. The strength of kinship ties is a factor indicated as

having a strong influence on family formation processes (Bühler & Philipov, 2005; Di Giulio, Bühler, Ette, Fraboni, & Ruckdeschel, 2012). Many studies emphasize that family bonds are exceptionally strong in Poland and can be regarded as one of the relevant factors explaining demographic behaviour (for review of studies on this issue see Slany (2002), p. 200-207). A direct and comparable measure of the strength of family ties across countries has been provided in (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). This study demonstrates that Poland together with Turkey, United States, Korea and Southern Europe constitutes the group of OECD countries with the strongest family ties.

Indeed, there is some evidence that historically and culturally rooted kinship cooperation serves in Poland as a mode for alleviating unemployment and poverty (Cox, Jimenez, & Okrasa, 1997). Recent research by Kotowska et al. (2010) suggests also that in general in Central and Eastern Europe, family members are indicated more often as the source of the potential material support received in difficult life time situations as compared to other countries. An extensive cross-country comparison on the forms and extent of intergenerational support in Europe has been provided in (Różańska-Putek, Jappens, Willaert, & Van Bavel, 2009), and it reveals that a non-negligible proportion of parents in Poland support their adult children financially. According to this study, Poland also belongs the group of countries with highest share of parents providing their adult children with help in household and care.

STATE SUPPORT FOR YOUTH

The welfare state support for youth may in general encompass many areas: starting with the education system (which may provide young people with student loans and stipends), through active labour market policies that facilitate a smooth transition from school to work, ending with housing and family policies that are not explicitly targeted at youth but in practice apply most of all to them. In Poland, the public expenditures and thus availability of these benefits are rather restricted as compared to other countries.

Regarding supporting youth investment in education, the financial assistance that provides equal opportunities for tertiary education cannot be regarded as a priority of Polish welfare state. Since transition to market economy in the early nineties, the demand for tertiary education has substantially exceeded supply. In response to that, rather than increasing investment in development of tertiary education provision within existing public higher education institutions, the Polish government established regulations that created a large and diverse market for private higher education (Kwiek, 2008). As a result, the majority of Polish students attend tertiary education programmes which require payments of fees. In absence of generous support from the state in the form of loans or stipends, and partly also due to limited opportunities of employment for unqualified youth, these fees are covered by their parents. According to (Wolf & Zohlnhöfer, 2009), even though Poland is by no means as rich as USA, Japan or Australia, it follows these countries in the international ranking of countries with the highest shares of private expenditures on tertiary education in GDP. This demonstrates the enormous effort of Polish households to provide the new generation with tertiary education, an effort that is hardly relieved by the state policies.

The facilitation of smooth transition from school to work, again, is not the priority for the Polish welfare state. Under conditions of persistently high unemployment, the goal of increases in the spending on active labour market policies that prevent the long term unemployment among youth compete with the necessity to tackle the joblessness and poverty among other social groups. Moreover, passive labour market policies, that is unemployment benefits are also hardly available to young people because eligibility to these benefits is granted only to those who fulfil the criterion of sufficient working experience (Baranowska & Piętka, 2011). Social assistance system is also oriented at supporting old-age or disabled individuals or individuals living in poor households. As long as young people are healthy and able to work and live in households that are not classified as poor, they cannot count on financial support from the state. They can only count on themselves or on their parents.

When it comes to leaving parental home and forming one's own family, again parents are the last resort. The existing housing policies do not cover the societal needs in terms of scope of funding and moreover the allocation of envisaged funds is inefficient – it targets those who actually do not need help and misses those who should be supported (NBP, 2011; Topińska, 2008). The cash benefits granted within family policies are very low by European standards, which results in very high risk of poverty among Polish parents (Kotowska, Józwiak, Matysiak, & Baranowska, 2008). The benefits in the form of public provision of childcare are also insufficient, meaning that children are usually taken care of either by parents themselves or by grandparents (Szelewa & Polakowski, 2008).

In sum, in Poland parents invest in their adult children's education, help them in finding the first job and provide them with financial assistance when it comes to buying a flat and establishing one's own household. They also continue supporting their adult children after young people set up a family and need help with childcare. In many other European countries, especially in Scandinavian ones, the welfare state serves most of these functions. However, in Poland the institutional arrangements are shaped in such a way that young people need to rely on their parents at every step that they make in the course of transition to adulthood and often also afterwards. This necessarily reinforces the ties between the generations that are anyway strongly rooted in the Polish culture.

IV.   DATA AND METHODS

Our analyses draw on data from the Polish GGS carried out in 2010. The survey was conducted by means of face-to-face interviews in a nationally representative sample. The questionnaire was based on the guidelines formulated by the international committee that set up the whole Generation and Gender Programme (Vikat et al., 2007). GGS provides very detailed information on union formation processes and in the same time it is a valuable source of data on intergenerational relations.

For the purpose of this study we used a subsample from GGS data made up of cohorts born in 1970-1993. We excluded young people whose parents are not alive because in this group we have no information on the quality of intergenerational relations. Next, in the analysis of the consequences of cohabitation, we focus on those individuals, who have formed their first union by the time of the survey. In this part of analysis, we exclude young people who live together with parents in the same household because GGS provides information on material transfers only if these transfers are provided by a person from another household. Sample descriptives for the latter cross-sectional subsample of young people who either married or cohabited in the first union are included in Table A1 in the Annex.

Our analyses proceed in two steps. First, we analyse the determinants of choosing cohabitation as the form of first union. The aim of this part of analysis is to assess whether young people raised in more liberal environments of cities, in better educated families that have less religious attitudes, are more likely to choose cohabitation rather than marriage as the form of their first union. To this end, we estimate hazard models, where entering into cohabitation and marriage are the competing risks. The parental education attainment is the key explanatory variable. Parental education was defined as either mothers or fathers education attainment, whichever was higher. Additionally, we examine the impact of religiosity and location of parental home. We control for parental divorce, because previous studies have shown that the experience of parental divorce may deter marriage and encourage less binding living arrangements (Kiernan, 1992; Thornton, 1991). We also control for individual-level characteristics of young adults, such as: education attainment and employment (both measured as time varying covariates) and the cohort of birth. In the hazard model framework we control also for the effects of duration dependence in union formation: remaining single in the young ages may affect the timing and type of union formation in the older ages. The models are estimated in discrete time by maximum likelihood method (Allison, 1982; Jenkins, 1995; Yamaguchi, 1991).The baseline hazard is specified in a semi-parametric way. The duration is divided into a number of time intervals which correspond to the ages at which a given individual

is under the risk of entering either into cohabitation or into marriage. Thus, we do not impose any functional form in the dependence between the time that has passed in the life course of given individual and the timing of union formation.

The next step of our analyses is to model the consequences of cohabitation for the quality of relations with parents. Obviously, it is quite challenging to operationalize the quality of human relations with data from observational studies. GGS data include variables that are considered as capturing these aspects of intergenerational relations quite well (Vikat et al., 2007). This survey provides information on the satisfaction from relationships with parents. We also have information on frequency of face-to-face contacts with parents, which is regarded as a form of transfer as it meets a need for emotional support (Kalmijn & Dykstra, 2006). We also use direct questions on having received material support from parents.

The first of the aforementioned variables is based on information from question: "How satisfied are you with the relationship with your father / mother?". The responses are coded on a ten point scale. The frequency of meetings with parents in Polish GGS is measured with a question that codes the number of visits per chosen unit of time (with the following possible options: weekly, monthly and annual). We first translate the unit of frequency of meetings into weekly measure (we assume 4 weeks in a month and 52 weeks in a year) and then multiply it by the indicated number of visits. Next, this frequency is grouped in the following intervals: (1) less than once a week (2) weekly (3) more often than weekly. The receipts of material transfers are measured with a question "During the last 12 months, have you or your partner/spouse received for one time, occasionally, or regularly money, assets, or goods of substantive value from a person outside the household?". Next, respondents were asked to indicate the persons from whom transfers were received. We generated binary variables indicating receipt of transfers from parents of respondent based on information from these two variables. Since our dependent variables in this part of analysis are measured on the ordinal scale, we estimate the ordered

probit models, where having cohabited rather than married in the first union is the key explanatory variable.

In these models, apart from controlling for a range of observed characteristics of young people that make the group of cohabiting different from the group of those who married, we take into account the fact that there may be some specific unobserved characteristics of people making choices on their first union which simultaneously affect the quality of relations with parents. Since we cannot measure all the potentially relevant characteristics of respondents, we extend the standard ordered probit framework to the version that corrects for selection effects. Such a model has been proposed by Sajaia (2008) and we follow his approach. The general idea of this model is to specify a function of variables that determine the choices of the type of union and include variables that do not directly affect the quality of relations with parents (the so-called exclusion restrictions). Then we estimate jointly the equations for choices of union type and the consequences of these choices, while allowing for correlation in error terms in these equations.

In the equation for selection into cohabitation, we control for the parental and individual-level characteristics that correspond to the variables included as covariates in the hazard models in the first step of our analyses. In the equation for the outcome variables, we additionally control for the time that has passed from age of 15 till union formation, the time since formation of first union till the date of interview and the current union status, because information on quality of relations with parents is cross-sectional rather than longitudinal and it describes current status quo. For the same reason, we control for current religiosity of young people. Since the distance between parental home and current place of residence of young people may affect all the three dimensions of relationships between the adult children and their parents, we control for the time that is needed to commute between these two locations. In the same time, religiosity and location of parental home are the exclusion restriction: they are assumed to affect selection into the group that chose to cohabit in the first union and to have no

direct impact on the quality of relationships with parents (the indirect impact, through the choice of living arrangements, is assume to be at work, though).

The modelling approach proposed by Sajaia (2008) allows examination of the correlation of the error terms which represent unobserved factors that affect propensity for cohabitation and simultaneously play a role for quality of relations between parents and their adult children. A positive correlation of error terms in equations for cohabitation and satisfaction from relations with parents may indicate that young people who, knowing about their good relations with their own parents, anticipate that these relations will not worsen after entering an informal partnership, are more likely to cohabit rather than marry directly. However, this correlation could be also negative, indicating that young people with high propensity for informal unions also tend to have looser relations with the older generation (e.g. because they contest parental values). We can also try to interpret the correlation of unobservables across cohabitation in the first union and frequency of meetings with parents or probability of receiving material help from them. A positive correlation between the error terms would indicate that a propensity to cohabit is related to closer contacts and frequent receipts of material assistance from parents. A negative correlation would suggest that young people who tend to cohabit, are less prone to frequent meetings and receiving financial help. In other words, a negative correlation could indicate that young people self-selecting to the group of cohabiters are relatively more independent from the support of their family.

V.   EMIRICAL RESULTS

DETERMINANTS OF COHABITATION

Our first step of analysis corresponds to the question if the parental background affects the choices of cohabitation instead of marriage in the first union among young people in Poland. Table 1 presents the results from competing risk hazard models that compare the relative risks of entering into cohabitation and marriage in the first union.

Regarding the effects of control variables, more recent cohorts tend to enter cohabitation rather than marriage more often as compared to the cohorts born in 1970ies. In line with previous research on cohabitation in Poland, tertiary education promotes marriage rather than cohabitation (Mynarska & Matysiak 2010).[2] Employment seems to encourage to cohabit rather than to marry directly. [3]

The results confirm that young people from tertiary and secondary educated families choose cohabitation rather than marriage as the form of first union more often than those from primary educated families. Based on the results from these models we have carried out the Wald tests for the equality of coefficients in the relative risk of entry into cohabitation versus marriage. According to the results of these tests, the relative risks of entry into cohabitation and marriage are significantly different for young people raised in tertiary educated families at 0.001 level. As compared to the reference group of those who were raised in families where parents have primary education, this difference is significant also for young people with secondary and lower secondary educated parents, but the difference in relative risks is largest in the group where parents have tertiary education. The results indicate that religiosity at parental home and it's localisation matter for choices regarding family formation. As compared to young people raised in medium towns, people whose parental home was located in large towns have higher relative risk of entry into marriage than into cohabitation (the Wald tests confirm a significance of difference in coefficients at 0.01 level). Similarly, young people raised in villages are more likely to marry rather than to cohabit. Moreover, as compared to young people who were brought up in families where religion did not play major role, those from religious families are more likely to marry directly rather than cohabit in their first union (the Wald tests confirm a significance of difference in coefficients at 0.001 level).

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[2] More detailed analyses have revealed that his effect is significant for only for men.
[3] Again, this effect is gender-specific: among men employment promotes marriage, among women increases the relative risk of entry into cohabitation.

Table 1. The relative risk of entry into cohabitation and marriage in the first union .

	cohabitation		marriage	
	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.
Individual characteristics				
baseline hazard				
duration up to 20 years of age	-4.63***	(0.18)	-3.97***	(0.15)
duration 20-24	-3.47***	(0.16)	-2.49***	(0.13)
duration 25-29	-3.31***	(0.17)	-2.44***	(0.14)
duration 30+	-3.79***	(0.20)	-3.32***	(0.17)
education attainment (ref. lower secondary)				
in education	-0.29***	(0.08)	-0.52***	(0.08)
tertiary	0.17	(0.11)	0.35***	(0.10)
lower secondary	-0.01	(0.10)	-0.12	(0.08)
primary	0.26*	(0.16)	-0.40***	(0.15)
employment (tvc)	0.72***	(0.07)	0.56***	(0.07)
cohort (ref. 1970-75)				
cohort1975-80	0.24**	(0.09)	-0.30***	(0.07)
cohort1980-85	0.52***	(0.09)	-0.60***	(0.07)
cohort1985-90	0.51***	(0.10)	-0.96***	(0.10)
cohort1990+	0.32	(0.20)	-2.11***	(0.42)
Parental characteristics				
location parental home (ref. medium towns)				
large towns	0.01	(0.07)	-0.25***	(0.07)
village	-0.48***	(0.08)	0.11*	(0.06)
religiosity at parental home	-0.29***	(0.07)	0.36***	(0.08)
parental education (re. primary)				
tertiary	0.19	(0.14)	-0.38***	(0.11)
upper secondary	0.19	(0.12)	-0.29***	(0.09)
lower secondary	0.18	(0.12)	0.03	(0.08)
parental divorce (tvc)	0.38***	(0.09)	-0.10	(0.12)
Log likelihood	-11002.49			
Number of person-periods	39918			

Note: Polish GGS data, author's calculations. * p<.05, ** p<.01, and *** p<.001

All in all, these results suggest that young people raised in less traditional and conservative environment are in general more likely to cohabit rather than to marry directly. This finding is consistent with arguments proposed in the literature on diffusion of cohabitation in traditional societies (Di Giulio & Rosina, 2007; Nazio & Blossfeld, 2003; Rosina & Fraboni, 2004; Schröder, 2008). However, at this point, we still cannot tell whether this empirical pattern is indeed driven by the fact that young people fear that their parents may not accept the choice of informal union arrangement. Other mechanisms described in Section 2, such as intergenerational transmission of values or the impact of parental preferences for grandchildren may also lead to the empirical patterns that we have found. In order to get closer to the full

understanding of how parents my affect the union choices of the younger generation, we move on to the next step of our analysis, where we examine the impact of cohabitation on the quality of relations between adult children and their parents.

CONSEQUENCES OF COHABITATION

In the next stage of our analyses, we compare: self-rated satisfaction from relations with mothers and fathers, frequency of contacts and probability of receiving material support from parents among cohabiting and married young people.

The self-rated satisfaction from contacts with parents is the most direct measure of the quality of the intergenerational relations out of the three aforementioned measures. The results presented in Table 2 show that cohabitation leads to a decrease in the satisfaction from relations with parents both among men and among women. The negative effects is insignificant in the standard regression models, where we control for selectivity of people deciding to cohabit based on the observed characteristics only. However, after controlling for selectivity of choosing cohabitation in the first union, this negative effect becomes significant. Hence, it seems that most young couples may indeed avoid living together out of wedlock and opt for direct marriage in order to avoid conflict with parental values and norms.

Regarding the effects of the control variables, we can note that a variable that exerts expected and significant impact is gender – women report higher satisfaction from relations with parents. Low education, poor financial situation and early partnership formation in turn is negatively correlated with satisfaction from family relationships. Religious people report higher satisfaction from relations with parents. Finally, parental divorce is of importance: having divorced parents means less satisfying relations with them.

Table 2. Satisfaction from relations with mothers and fathers.

	satisfaction from relations with mother - standard probit		satisfaction from relations with mothe- - selection model		satisfaction from relations with father - standard probit		satisfaction from relations with father - selection model	
	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.
Type of first union: cohabitation (ref. marriage)	-0.07	(0.05)	-0.86***	(0.20)	-0.07	(0.05)	-0.66***	(0.21)
cohort (ref. born after 1970)								
born after 1975	0.04	(0.10)	0.12	(0.09)	0.05	(0.10)	0.11	(0.10)
born after 1980	0.15	(0.17)	0.35**	(0.16)	0.16	(0.16)	0.32*	(0.17)
born after 1985	0.18	(0.24)	0.45*	(0.23)	0.13	(0.23)	0.34	(0.23)
born after 1990	0.87**	(0.37)	1.24***	(0.37)	0.65*	(0.36)	0.94***	(0.36)
women (ref. men)	0.33***	(0.05)	0.24***	(0.06)	0.24***	(0.05)	0.18***	(0.06)
education attainment (ref. lower secondary)								
tertiary	0.01	(0.08)	0.05	(0.08)	-0.00	(0.08)	0.03	(0.08)
secondary	0.02	(0.07)	0.03	(0.07)	-0.02	(0.07)	-0.02	(0.06)
primary	-0.22*	(0.13)	-0.13	(0.13)	-0.22*	(0.13)	-0.15	(0.13)
in education	-0.14*	(0.08)	-0.11	(0.08)	-0.08	(0.08)	-0.05	(0.08)
time from age of 15 till entry into first union	0.03*	(0.02)	0.03*	(0.02)	0.04**	(0.02)	0.04**	(0.02)
time since formation of first union	0.01	(0.02)	0.01	(0.01)	0.01	(0.02)	0.01	(0.02)
currently married (ref. not married)	-0.03	(0.08)	-0.05	(0.07)	0.06	(0.08)	0.05	(0.07)
currently working (ref. not working)	-0.03	(0.06)	-0.03	(0.06)	-0.02	(0.06)	-0.02	(0.06)
poor financial household's standing (ref. good)	-0.15***	(0.05)	-0.14***	(0.05)	-0.17***	(0.05)	-0.16***	(0.05)
importance of religion for respondent	0.22***	(0.05)	0.13**	(0.06)	0.25***	(0.05)	0.18***	(0.06)
Parental characteristics								
parental education (ref. primary)								
tertiary	0.02	(0.10)	0.14	(0.10)	-0.03	(0.10)	0.06	(0.10)
upper secondary	0.01	(0.08)	0.10	(0.08)	-0.04	(0.08)	0.04	(0.08)
lower secondary	0.04	(0.08)	0.06	(0.08)	-0.00	(0.08)	0.02	(0.08)
parental divorce before age 15	-0.44***	(0.14)	-0.31**	(0.15)	-0.82***	(0.14)	-0.72***	(0.15)
commuting time to parental home (in hours)	-0.06	(0.04)	-0.06	(0.04)	-0.07*	(0.04)	-0.07*	(0.04)
correlation of error terms across the equations			0.53***	(0.16)			0.38***	(0.15)
Log likelihood	-3424.95		-4840.57		-3865.47		-5282.87	
N	2337.00		2337.00		2337.00		2337.00	

Note: Polish GGS data, author's calculations. * p<.05, ** p<.01, and *** p<.001. Estimates for the values of cutpoints not displayed.

Regarding the effects of cohabitation on the frequency of meetings with mothers and fathers, the outcomes of the standard probit models suggest that there is a negative association between cohabitation and the frequency of meetings with mothers, the same applies to meetings with fathers. However, if we take into account the potential unobserved characteristics which simultaneously affect choices of union type and frequency of meetings, the results indicate that the negative influence of cohabitation on meetings with parents might be spurious. If we take selectivity of cohabitation into account, it appears that the type of union as such does not have a negative effect on contacts with mothers. The same applies to the selection model estimated for meetings with fathers, but in this model the selection effects are insignificant. Hence, the model for contacts with father that controls for selectivity does not fit the data significantly better than a standard probit model. Still, the overall impression is that having chosen a type of partnership which is not in line with tradition and which is not commonly accepted in the Polish society does not necessarily translate into lower frequency of meetings with both parents.

Regarding the effects of the control variables, we can note that individual-level characteristics included in this analysis have little impact on the frequency of meetings. We do not see the expected U-shaped pattern in the relationship between age and frequency of contacts. We also do not note a trend of decreasing frequency across generations. This could be due to a limited range of cohorts included in our analysis, though. A variable that exerts expected and significant impact is gender – in line with theoretical predictions and results from previous empirical studies, women have more frequent contracts with parents than men. Otherwise, parental characteristics determine the frequency of contacts much more evidently. Young people who have better educated parents meet their family relatively more often than those who have lower educated parents. The distance to parental home is also a very strong determinant, which is also consistent with previous research. The more time is needed to commute to the parents' place of residence, the less frequent meetings. Finally, parental divorce is of importance, but as indicated in earlier research, its impact is asymmetric: having divorced parents means less frequent meetings with fathers but not necessarily with mothers.

Table 3. Frequency of contacts with mother and father.

	contacts with mother standard probit		contacts with mother selection model		contacts with father standard probit		contacts with father selection model	
	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.
Type of first union: cohabitation (ref. marriage)	-0.13**	(0.06)	0.48	(0.34)	-0.15**	(0.06)	0.31	(0.34)
Individual characteristics								
cohort (ref. born after 1970)								
born after 1975	0.09	(0.11)	0.02	(0.11)	0.12	(0.11)	0.06	(0.12)
born after 1980	0.06	(0.19)	-0.12	(0.20)	0.07	(0.19)	-0.06	(0.21)
born after 1985	0.05	(0.27)	-0.17	(0.29)	0.12	(0.27)	-0.05	(0.29)
born after 1990	-0.08	(0.42)	-0.42	(0.45)	-0.01	(0.43)	-0.26	(0.46)
women (ref. men)	0.25***	(0.06)	0.29***	(0.06)	0.24***	(0.06)	0.28***	(0.06)
education attainment (ref. lower secondary)								
tertiary	-0.07	(0.09)	-0.10	(0.09)	-0.15*	(0.09)	-0.17*	(0.09)
secondary	-0.00	(0.07)	-0.01	(0.07)	-0.05	(0.07)	-0.05	(0.07)
primary	0.12	(0.15)	0.06	(0.15)	0.07	(0.15)	0.02	(0.15)
in education	0.15	(0.10)	0.13	(0.10)	0.10	(0.10)	0.08	(0.10)
time from age of 15 till entry into first union	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.00	(0.02)	-0.01	(0.02)
time since formation of first union	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.00	(0.02)	-0.01	(0.02)
currently married (ref. not married)	0.02	(0.09)	0.03	(0.09)	0.05	(0.09)	0.05	(0.09)
currently working (ref. not working)	-0.02	(0.07)	-0.01	(0.07)	-0.04	(0.07)	-0.03	(0.07)
poor financial household's standing (ref. good)	0.06	(0.06)	0.06	(0.05)	0.04	(0.06)	0.04	(0.05)
importance of religion (ref. low)	-0.03	(0.06)	0.02	(0.07)	-0.00	(0.06)	0.04	(0.07)
Parental characteristics								
parental education (ref. primary)								
tertiary	0.40***	(0.11)	0.29**	(0.13)	0.39***	(0.11)	0.31**	(0.13)
upper secondary	0.37***	(0.09)	0.28***	(0.11)	0.38***	(0.09)	0.32***	(0.11)
lower secondary	0.22**	(0.09)	0.19**	(0.09)	0.25***	(0.09)	0.22**	(0.09)
parental divorce before age 15	-0.12	(0.17)	-0.19	(0.17)	-0.84***	(0.18)	-0.87***	(0.18)
commuting time to parental home (in hours)	-1.74***	(0.06)	-1.66***	(0.10)	-1.70***	(0.06)	-1.66***	(0.08)
correlation of error terms across the equations			-0.39*	(0.24)			-0.29	(0.22)
Log likelihood	-1876.90		-3295.88		-1885.88		-3305.40	
N	2337		2337		2337		2337	

Note: Polish GGS data, author's calculations. * p<.05, ** p<.01, and *** p<.001. Estimates for the values of cutpoints not displayed

While the frequency of meetings may be interpreted as a measure of emotional support that parents provide for their adult children, we are also interested in the analysis of material support. The results on the impact of cohabitation on material transfers are presented in Table 4. Again, we present two versions of models: a standard probit model where we control for observed characteristics of cohabiting and married, and a model with correction for effects of selection on unobservables.

The standard probit models suggests that cohabitation is positively associated with being supported by parents. Interestingly, if we take into account the fact that cohabiters may differ from married also in terms of some characteristics that we cannot directly measure, the positive impact of cohabiting actually strengthens rather than vanishes. Hence, controlling for the unobserved characteristics which may simultaneously affect choices of union type and chances of receiving transfers, does not change the conclusion that having cohabited does not lower the parental material support that young people may receive from their family.

Table 4. Probability of receiving material transfers from parents

	material transfers - standard probit		material transfers - selection model	
	coef.	s.e.	coef.	s.e.
Type of first union: cohabitation (ref. marriage)	0.16*	(0.09)	0.90**	(0.36)
Individual characteristics				
cohort (ref. born after 1970)				
born after 1975	-0.18	(0.17)	-0.25	(0.17)
born after 1980	-0.33	(0.29)	-0.51*	(0.28)
born after 1985	-0.17	(0.40)	-0.42	(0.39)
born after 1990	-0.08	(0.55)	-0.47	(0.56)
women (ref. men)	-0.01	(0.09)	0.05	(0.09)
education attainment (ref. lower secondary)				
tertiary	0.27*	(0.14)	0.23	(0.14)
secondary	0.25**	(0.12)	0.24**	(0.12)
primary	-0.13	(0.25)	-0.21	(0.24)
in education	0.27**	(0.12)	0.23**	(0.11)
time from age of 15 till entry into first union	-0.04	(0.03)	-0.04	(0.03)
time since formation of first union	-0.07**	(0.03)	-0.07**	(0.03)
currently married (ref. not married)	-0.03	(0.11)	-0.01	(0.11)
currently working (ref. not working)	-0.26***	(0.10)	-0.25***	(0.09)
poor financial household's standing (ref. good)	0.37***	(0.08)	0.35***	(0.08)
importance of religion for respondent	0.03	(0.09)	0.09	(0.09)

Parental characteristics				
parental education (ref. primary)				
tertiary	0.32*	(0.17)	0.19	(0.17)
upper secondary	-0.02	(0.15)	-0.10	(0.14)
lower secondary	-0.09	(0.14)	-0.10	(0.14)
parental divorce before age 15	-0.09	(0.23)	-0.17	(0.23)
commuting time to parental home (in hours)	0.09	(0.06)	0.09	(0.06)
correlation of error terms across the equations			-0.48*	(0.26)
Log likelihood	-655.69		-2074.71	
N	2337		2337	

Note: Polish GGS data, author's calculations. * p<.05, ** p<.01, and *** p<.001. Estimates for the values of cutpoints not displayed.

Regarding the effects of control variables, individual resources and parental characteristics do determine the probability of receiving material transfers from parents. We do not observe any particular cohort or age effects, neither does gender matter for probability of receiving transfers. However, there is some interesting influence of education attainment. First of all, young people who participate in education are more likely to receive support from parents. Second, tertiary or secondary educated people tend to be supported relatively more recently than the lower secondary educated group. This could be related to the fact that longer education means postponement of establishing ones own household and young people who left parental home recently usually relatively receive more material transfers. As the time from union formation passes, the probability of receiving transfers decreases. The employment status and financial situation of young people has a significant impact on probability of receiving support. Obviously, those who are employed tend to receive relatively less support, whereas poor financial situation of the young people's households makes parents provide material assistance. Tertiary educated parents are more likely to make material transfers (although this effect vanishes in the model that controls for selection effects).

VI.   SUMMARY

In this paper we investigated the determinants and consequences of choosing cohabitation from the perspective of the quality of intergenerational relations. This perspective is relevant above all for traditional societies with strong role of kinship ties. We used data from the recent Generation and Gender Survey carried out in Poland, which is a good example of a

conservative society, where family is strongly valued and in the same time remains an important source of support for youth. Our aim was to examine if young people may take parental norms and attitudes into account when they make choices of their living arrangements.

Our results confirm that people choosing cohabitation as the first union were raised in better educated and less religious families who lived in towns rather than in villages. Families with such a profile are regarded as more liberal and open-minded. This is consistent with the theoretical idea that in traditional societies, cohabitation is a selective process that occurs mostly among young people who do not need to bear the negative consequences of lack of family acceptance for their choices of living arrangements.
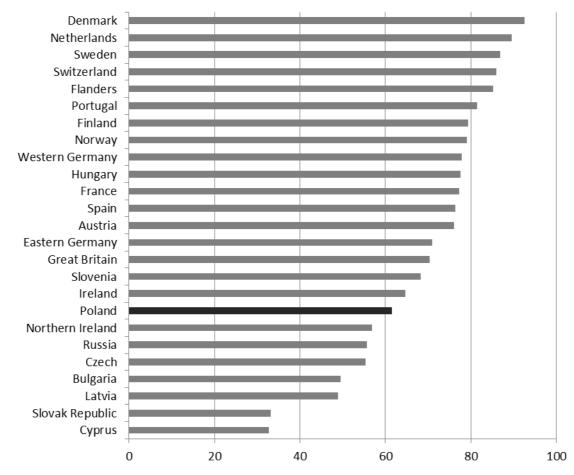
We argued that the evidence on the characteristics of people choosing cohabitation is necessary but not sufficient for testing the hypotheses on the impact of parental attitudes on the partnership choices of young people. Therefore, we have provided also the evidence on the potential consequences of choices of partnership types among young people. This part of our analysis shows that cohabitation per se does have a significant negative impact on relations with parents and their adult children as long as it is measured directly by self-rated satisfaction reported by young people. The results of the impact of cohabitation on the frequency of meetings are much more ambiguous. We do not have strong evidence that cohabitation reduces the frequency of contacts between both parents and their adult children. Moreover, according to our results the negative effects of cohabitation on relationships with parents do not translate into lower probability of receiving material support from parents. It seems that even if parents don't accept the partnership choices of their adult children, they do not refuse to support them in case of need.

Our findings, apart from shedding some light on the mechanisms beyond the intergenerational relations, are also interesting from the point of view of the recent discussions whether cohabitation results from ideational change or rather reflects a pattern of disadvantage. Our results support the view that even if the younger generations have increasingly positive

attitudes towards nonmarital cohabitation, the norms and values of the older generation may prevent diffusion of "atypical" union formation patterns, especially in countries with strong kinship ties and lack of policies that support self-reliance of youth.

ANNEX

Figure A1 Social acceptance for cohabitation in European countries.

Source: ISSP 2002, author's calculations.

Table A1. Sample means

	Mean / Proportion	Standard Deviation
Individual characteristics		
Cohort born after 1970	0.26	0.44
Cohort born after 1975	0.33	0.47
Cohort born after 1980	0.28	0.45
Cohort born after 1985	0.12	0.33
Cohort born after 1990	0.01	0.11
Gender		
men	0.40	0.49
women	0.60	0.49

Education attainment		
tertiary	0.30	0.46
secondary	0.46	0.50
lower secondary	0.20	0.40
primary	0.04	0.19
in education	0.10	0.30
Current labour market status		
employed	0.80	0.40
not employed	0.20	0.40
Self-rated financial household's standing		
poor	0.43	0.50
good	0.57	0.50
Importance of religion for respondent		
important	0.70	0.46
not important	0.30	0.46
Time from age of 15 till entry into first union (in years)	8.41	3.42
Time that passed since formation of first union (in years)	8.49	5.41
Current civil status		
married	0.85	0.35
not married	0.15	0.35
Parental characteristics		
Parental education		
tertiary	0.16	0.37
secondary	0.38	0.48
lower secondary	0.33	0.47
primary	0.12	0.33
Commuting time to parental home (in hours)	0.62	0.63
Parental divorce till age 15		
parents divorced	0.02	0.16
parents did not divorce	0.98	0.16

Note: Polish GGS data, author's calculations.

Table A2. Results from probit model on selection into cohabitation.

	coef.	s.e.
Individual characteristics		
women (ref. men)	-0.23***	(0.06)
cohort (ref. born after 1970)		
born after 1975	0.29***	(0.07)
born after 1980	0.73***	(0.08)
born after 1985	0.96***	(0.10)
born after 1990	1.44***	(0.31)
education attainment (ref. lower secondary)		
tertiary	0.06	(0.09)
secondary	-0.03	(0.08)
primary	0.27*	(0.16)
in education	0.06	(0.10)
Parental characteristics		
parental education (ref. primary)		
tertiary	0.24*	(0.12)
upper secondary	0.19*	(0.10)
lower secondary	0.02	(0.10)
parental divorce before age 15	0.26	(0.18)

location of parental home at age 15 (ref. small town)		
metropolitan	0.14**	(0.07)
village	-0.32***	(0.07)
importance of religion at parental home	-0.39***	(0.07)
N		

Note: Polish GGS data, author's calculations.

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