



*3rd ISA Forum, RC33 Logic and Methodology in Sociology:  
The Futures We Expect:  
Time and Future Concepts As a Methodological Challenge  
in Qualitative and Mixed Method*

**IS IT TIME TO LEAVE THE NEST?  
DESCRIBING AND EXPLAINING YOUTH'S TIMELINE.**



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*Why is studying young adults' «housing autonomy» and the their time of achievement a crucial issues?*

- «**Dependent Generation**»: the dependence from public and/or familial resources for the duration of home-leaving transition. «*Housing autonomy*» is preferred to «*housing independence*» [Cavalli et al., 2006]. This is usually defined as “paradoxical situation” [Cicchelli, 2001].
- «**Generation rent**»: difficulties to access homeownership within homeowners society for low-income household and atypical workers [Poggio and Baldini, 2010]

*Who are young adult people?*

- **Theoretically**: new light on the question of **young adult categorisation**: prolonged adolescence [Galland, 2003] or new age of life [Arnett, 2006]?
- **Practically**: “age became a **convenient dimension** for generating informal social and cultural expectations for “adulthood” and for reifying these expectations more formally in laws and policies.” [Spéder, 2013p.3; Loncle and Muniglia, 2011].

❖ **Scholars of life course analysis** [Mayer and Müller, 1986; Settersten, 1998; Shanahan et al., 1999; Heinz and Marshall, 2013] **have largely contributed to explain the shifting from institutionalised, standardised and linear trajectories to adulthood toward pathways in which:**

*“sequences have come to be highly synchronous, states less uniform collectively and occurring at more dispersed ages and transitions have become more and more characterised by turning points”*

[MacMillan, 2005; pp.32-33].

→ **Little has been done, however, to consider identity formation, individual mechanisms and strategies that are directly involved both in adulthood transition and in timing perception.**

❖ **In both countries youth residential autonomy is achieved later compared to the previous generations** [Corijn, 2001; Billari and Liefbroer, 2007]

→ **Timing differences between French** [Lhommeau, 2014; Villeneuve-Gokalp, 2000] **and Italian people** [Ferrari et al. 2013; Aasve, 2002].

### ❖ Push and stay factors:

**In France: Opinions of peer groups and social pressure as push factor:** it influences timing and ways to leave the parental home in France [Galland, 2000]

**In Italy: Family as stay factor:** “the strength of intergenerational ties” [Ogg&Renaut, 2005; Saraceno, 1994] or “gilded cage” [Mencarini, 2010; Mencarini&Tanturri, 2006].

### ❖ Waiting strategies and level of education:

**In France: lower-educated** people from the lower classes are more penalized by the labour market and prolong their permanence at the parental home [Galland, 2001]

**In Italy: highly educated** people from the middle classes wait for a better job position before leaving the nest [Fullin, 2004]

### ❖ Homeownership and renting symbol of :

**Homeownership as a “status symbol”** to show own self-fulfilment in line with home ownership culture [Bugeja-Bloch, 2013; Holdsworth and Irazoqui Solda, 2002] as well as **an investment for old age** in terms of “**property based welfare state**”? [Dewilde and Raeymaeckers, 2008]

**Renting as a shortcut** to reach own residential autonomy as soon as possible?; the **only opportunity** to move out from the parental home? A **first step** toward home-ownership?



### III. COMPARISON ON INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: NEW CHALLENGES IN DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

WHY AND HOW DO COMPARE  
FRENCH AND ITALIAN  
YOUNG ADULTS?

	Labour market	Welfare state	Educational system	Housing market
Italy	<p>Strong <b>segmentation</b> [Blossfeld et al. 2011; Barbieri, 2007].</p> <p>Atypical contracts [Bertolini and Torrioni, 2014]: - <b>stepping stones effect</b> for the highly educated, - <b>a trap</b> for lower educated people.</p>	<p><b>Mediterranean</b> regime [Guerrero 2001; Ferrera, 1996].</p> <p><b>Lack of a coherent welfare reform</b> [Maestriperi and Sabatinelli, 2014; Berton et al., 2009]</p> <p><b>Family as intergenerational safety valves</b> [Naldini and Saraceno, 2011]</p>	<p><b>Weak connection</b> system of education and <b>labour market</b>;</p> <p>Vocational and training paths separated from LM demand;</p> <p><b>Lower EU percentage of highly educated</b> people [Ballarino and Scherer, 2013].</p>	<p>The largest «class of <b>homeownership</b> in Europe» [Filandri, 2015; Poggio and Baldini, 2010]</p> <p><b>Lack of social housing</b> stocks [Six and Tahiri, 2014; Hoekstra, 2013]</p> <p><b>Lack of substantial benefits</b> for tenants in the private rental sector [Pittini and Laino, 2011]</p>
France	<p>Strong <b>segmentation</b> [Palier and Thelen, 2010; Grelet et al., 2007];</p> <p>Atypical contract [Di Paola and Mullet, 2010]: - <b>entry ticket</b> for the highly qualified, - <b>a trap</b> of precarious jobs for low educated and unskilled people.</p>	<p><b>Conservative</b> regime [Chauvel, Schröder, 2014 Magnusson, 2014].</p> <p>Structured system of labour policies [Barret et al., 2014; Busemeyer and Trampush, 2012];</p> <p>Policies to <b>empower young people</b> in the labour market to achieve adulthood.</p>	<p><b>Standardized path but differentiation in the kind of University</b></p> <p>VET paths introduced in University programs [Brochier and Romani, 2015; Verdier, 2013].</p> <p>Public engagement in supporting <b>networks</b> between schools and large companies [Issehnane, 2001; Fougère et al., 2000].</p>	<p>Specific legislation regarding <b>social housing</b> in line with the «<b>collectivist ideology</b>» [[Arundel and Ronald, 2015; Kemeny, 1992]</p> <p><b>Housing policies</b> [Fijalkow, 2013; Baloup and Pittini, 2012]</p> <p><b>Structural lack of affordable dwellings to rent</b> [Bugeja-Bloch, 2014].</p>



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

To what extent are individual and family background characteristics associated with young adult housing autonomy in both countries?

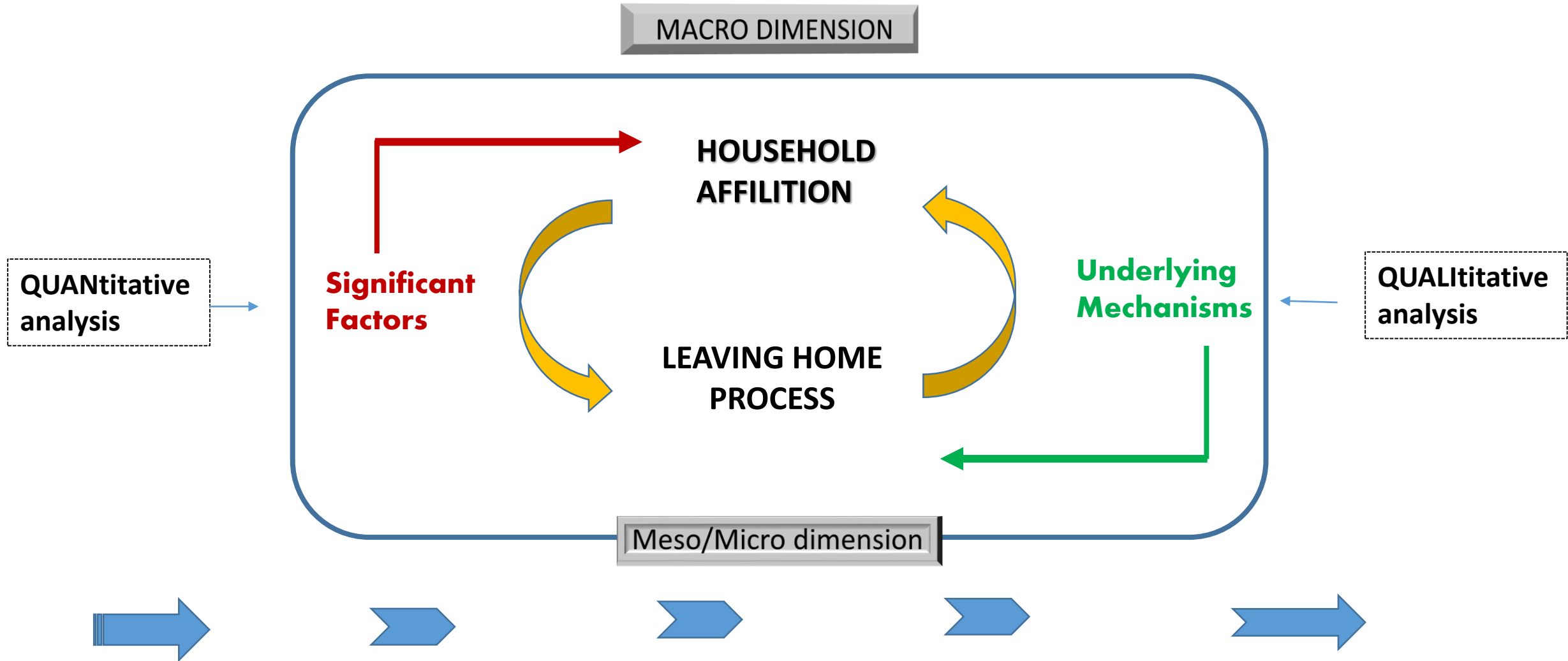
How do the choices regarding housing autonomy change and what coping mechanisms do they use to achieve their goal and how do they perceive their lifetime?

## METHODOLOGY

**Mixed-method research design** [Small, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009; Cronholm and Hjalmarsson; 2009; Creswell, 2003]

**Complementary techniques** : *“The greatest value in combining types of data lies in the ability of one type to compensate for the weaknesses of the other.”* [Small, 2011; p.64]

**Quanti-Qualitative sequential approach**: *“ The research phases occur in a consecutive order [...] The research questions addressed as well as the procedures used in one phase depend on the previous phase”* [Ivankova et al., 2006]



## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

We assume that to a certain degree and comparing them to the propensity to live with a partner, the same characteristics that correlate to the propensity to live with parents in Italy are correlated to the propensity to live alone in France.

We expect to find that:

- I. the propensity of living with parents compared to living in partnership is significantly higher for Italians than for the French, whereas the corresponding propensity to live alone is higher among the French. **(COUNTRY HYPOTHESIS)**
- II. men are more likely to live with parents or alone than women. We expect this to be the case in both countries. **(GENDER HYPOTHESIS)**
- III. a parent in a non-managerial position (as compared to a parent in a managerial position) decreases the relative propensity of living at the parental home in Italy whereas it increases the propensity to live alone in France. **(PARENTAL ECONOMIC BACKGROUND HYPOTHESIS)**
- IV. a non-working mother (as compared to a working-mother) increases the relative risk of living at the parental home for Italians and the relative risk of living alone for the French. **(MOTHER'S ACTIVITY STATUS HYPOTHESIS)**
- V. being unemployed (as compared to being employed) increases the relative probability of living with parents in Italy and the relative probability to live alone in France decreases. **(YOUNG ADULTS' ACTIVITY STATUS HYPOTHESIS)**
- VI. temporary contracts (as compared to permanent contracts) decrease the propensity of living with parents for Italians and the propensity of living alone for the French. **(EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT HYPOTHESIS)**



**Tab. 2 Italian young adults and household affiliation**  
% and absolute values in parentheses

	Household affiliation		
	Couple	Parents	Alone
<b>Male</b>	<b>23.39</b>	<b>58.42</b>	<b>16.19</b>
[2,328]	[591]	[1,360]	[377]
<b>Female</b>	<b>40.93</b>	<b>45.71</b>	<b>13.36</b>
[2,321]	[950]	[1,061]	[310]
<b>Manager</b>	<b>32.03</b>	<b>51.96</b>	<b>16.01</b>
[1,149]	[368]	[597]	[184]
<b>Non-manager</b>	<b>37.30</b>	<b>47.75</b>	<b>14.95</b>
[2,689]	[1,003]	[1,284]	[402]
<b>Working mother</b>	<b>31.64</b>	<b>51.26</b>	<b>17.10</b>
[1,906]	[603]	[977]	[326]
<b>Non-working mother</b>	<b>39.88</b>	<b>46.51</b>	<b>13.61</b>
[2,094]	[835]	[974]	[285]
<b>Employee</b>	<b>36.84</b>	<b>45.79</b>	<b>17.37</b>
[2,424]	[893]	[1,110]	[421]
<b>Self-employed</b>	<b>33.13</b>	<b>47.97</b>	<b>18.91</b>
[640]	[212]	[307]	[121]
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>21.94</b>	<b>65.96</b>	<b>12.10</b>
[711]	[156]	[469]	[86]
<b>Inactive</b>	<b>32.86</b>	<b>60.00</b>	<b>7.14</b>
[70]	[23]	[42]	[5]
<b>Permanent</b>	<b>38.80</b>	<b>44.50</b>	<b>16.70</b>
[2,054]	[797]	[914]	[343]
<b>Temporary</b>	<b>28.48</b>	<b>55.73</b>	<b>15.80</b>
[899]	[256]	[501]	[142]

The parents' position does not seem to affect the choice to leave home in Italy

The category of young Italian adults at the parental home and with working mother shows the highest percentage.

French unemployed live in couple more than Italians

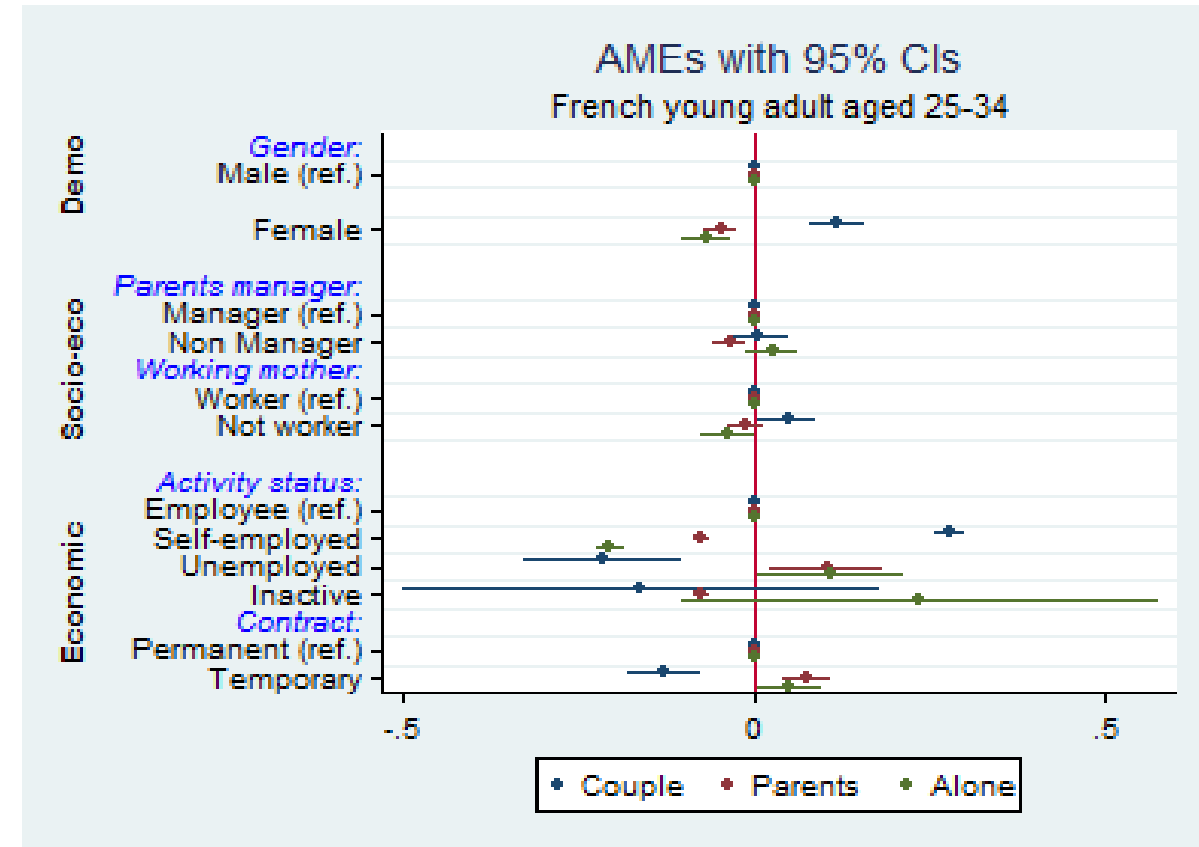
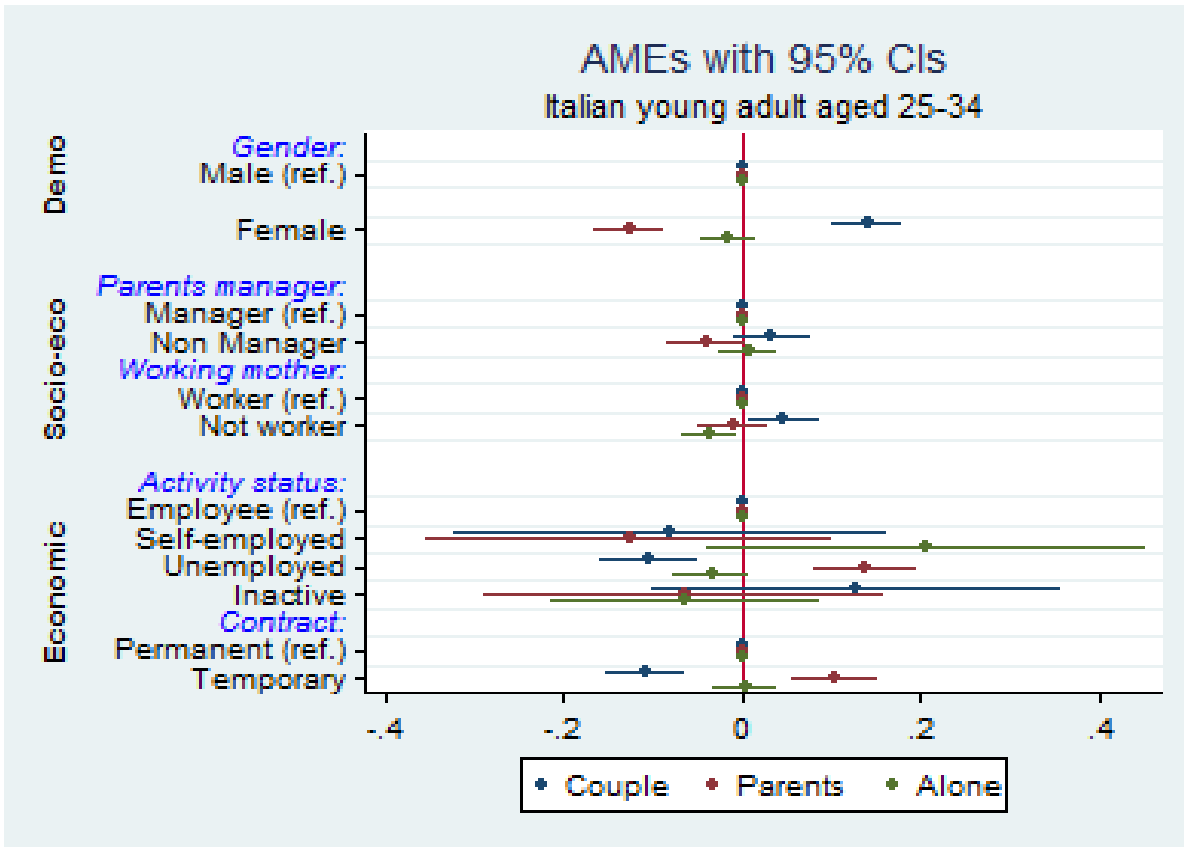
French temporary workers live alone more than Italians

Source: My elaboration based on EU SILC (2011)

**Tab. 3 Italian young adults and household affiliation**  
% and absolute values in parentheses

	Household affiliation		
	Couple	Parents	Alone
<b>Male</b>	<b>62.82</b>	<b>13.83</b>	<b>23.35</b>
[1,396]	[877]	[193]	[326]
<b>Female</b>	<b>75.42</b>	<b>7.96</b>	<b>16.42</b>
[1,444]	[1,089]	[115]	[240]
<b>Manager</b>	<b>70.35</b>	<b>10.95</b>	<b>18.70</b>
[1,059]	[745]	[116]	[198]
<b>Non-manager</b>	<b>70.84</b>	<b>8.29</b>	<b>20.87</b>
[1,495]	[1,059]	[124]	[312]
<b>Working mother</b>	<b>69.65</b>	<b>9.13</b>	<b>21.22</b>
[1,819]	[1,267]	[166]	[386]
<b>Non-working mother</b>	<b>73.13</b>	<b>9.56</b>	<b>17.31</b>
[744]	[566]	[74]	[134]
<b>Employee</b>	<b>72.15</b>	<b>7.85</b>	<b>20.00</b>
[2,140]	[1,544]	[168]	[428]
<b>Self-employed</b>	<b>80.69</b>	<b>7.59</b>	<b>11.72</b>
[145]	[117]	[11]	[17]
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>44.19</b>	<b>25.97</b>	<b>29.84</b>
[258]	[114]	[67]	[77]
<b>Inactive</b>	<b>47.22</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>19.44</b>
[36]	[17]	[12]	[7]
<b>Permanent</b>	<b>74.25</b>	<b>6.45</b>	<b>19.30</b>
[1,767]	[1,312]	[114]	[341]
<b>Temporary</b>	<b>60.19</b>	<b>14.95</b>	<b>24.86</b>
[535]	[322]	[80]	[133]

Source: My elaboration based on EU SILC (2011)



The change in probability:

- for living in partnership increases 17 p.p moving **from men to women** whereas the change in probability for living with parents decreases 13 p.p..
- is negative moving from young adult of **working mother** to young adult of non-working mother.
- increases 14 p.p when young adult activity status goes **from being employed to being unemployed** whereas it decreases by 8 p.p. and 5 p.p. for living alone and living in partnership respectively.

The change in probability:

- for living with parents decreases 4 p.p. whereas it increases 3.5 p.p. for living alone, when moving **from parents in managerial position to parents in non-managerial position**,
- Increases by 28 p.p , for living in partnership and decreases for living with parents (-7 p.p.) and for living alone (- 20 p.p.), moving **from being employed to being self-employed**
- for living in partnership decreases by 20 p.p going from being employed to be inactive
- decreases 8.9 p.p. for living in partnership and increases 5 p.p. for living with parents moving from permanent contracts to temporary contracts

The most significant individual characteristics positively related to the various household affiliation outcome of young adult women and men in Italy and France.

<i>Household affiliation outcome</i>	Country	
	Italy	France
<b>Live with parents</b>	Men Unemployed	Men Parent in managerial position (only men) Temporary (only women)
<b>Live alone</b>	Men Y.A. with working mother (only women)	Men
<b>Live in partnership</b>	Women	Women

*Note: Characteristics are significant at 0.01 level*

In France and Italy, it is primarily the **structural condition** of the labor market and housing market that hinders the transition to housing autonomy. These are more marked in Italy, where housing policies are absent and rental market is slightly regulated.

Ivan: *“You ask if I think about leaving my folks? How can I! I told you already that it's a miracle if I work two months straight....think about paying rent? No thanks, that's the last thing I need.”* (Italian man, 26 years old with government-subsidized contract, at the parental home)

Even though it would be relatively simple to limit the structural difficulties in achieving housing autonomy, there are various **cultural and psychological** factors in play that affect this choice.

In Italy, young men tend to live a **Bohemian life-style**, compensating their job precariousness with the security of living at home with their parents. Their housing trajectories are linear and marked by their **acceptance of having to adapt**.

Ludovica: *“I have a colleague whose mother makes lunch for him everyday. He earns well, but says, “why should I leave home?” You know what I mean? [annoyed expression]. In some ways, living at home is a lot easier but leaving home is a natural thing that has to happen. [...]. The family is lovely, comforting...but only when I come back home at the weekend [she laughs].”* (Italian woman, 26 years old, lawyer, lives alone)

→ In France, young people's trajectories of leaving home are more varied and reversible.

The interviews have shown that young French people are willing to do **without basic necessities**, which means that the new generation experiences forms of fragility with regard to entering adulthood.

*Eleonora: “I wanted to find my own way. It's a bit automatic. In France, when you turn 18, you are expected to leave your parents. And once again, I was able to do so because I could count on my parents' financial help, because my father has his own small business and he has always helped me. Yes, I'm lucky because my father can afford to and he'll never leave on our own...If he ever knew that I never turned on the heating last year, I think it would make him quite angry...But at a certain, you want to make it on your own, also dealing with situations that aren't all that bad, you want to say, 'I can deal with managing with my own money even if...', you want to be at least slightly independent. I really can't do it any more, to be dependent on my father, on a scholarship and housing benefits...: 'oh, you never didn't deposit any money for me, now I'm broke.”* (French woman, 26 years old, temporary worker, father in a managerial position)



→ The **cultural valorization of early independence** comes up against the existence of financial conditions that slow down its achievement. However, the departure from the parental home is not always synonymous with **having made the 'best' choice**, and is often seen as **a choice of 'no-return'**, unless there are some specific reasons to return.

*Lise: “In fact, even though I'm part of the minority of the privileged, I have friends younger than I am who are still living with their parents, to whom I always say: If you want to leave home, I understand that you want to become emancipated, but I'd advise you against it, because life out there is really hard, it stinks!” (French woman, 26 years old, unemployed, father in a managerial position).*

→ On the one hand, there's the **questing of the socio-cultural model** that tries to force you to conform. On the other, there is the desire and the need to leave home. The threshold of the age of thirty is considered **to be the deadline**.

*Colin: “No, there is no particular age, and it depends on what you want to do and where you live. Because if you are a student at the University in Lyons and your parents live in Lyons, it's not worth it to live away from home. It a matter of context, and not age. But if your around thirty and still living home...(he laughs). But the are specific cases, extreme cases. My goal was to leave home as soon as possible, because I wanted to live my own life. There are always various aspects to consider, t depends on the conditions...” (French man, 30 years old, unemployed, father in a managerial position).*

→ Young adults seem to perceive that their **parental model is changed and no longer holds true**. There is a sort of **personal dissociation** that has arisen when they think about the previous generation. Comparing themselves with their peers, they see that everyone is in the same situation.

*Anael: "Just think, my mother was my age when she had me... It's better not to think of it. I feel like I'm late. I'm late compared to my mother's generation... but then I look around.... And maybe we are all late....but late for what?"*

*Alessia: "We have been together for many years but I had never left home out of respect for my parents and maybe it would have been useless. So, we have managed to save up instead of paying rent and now we are paying a mortgage. Now I'm 30, and everything is just starting....and I haven't figured out my next goal. Not that I don't have one, but I can't manage to see what it is."*

*Mario : "Now, we would like to have children, but we're not in any hurry. We find ourselves in a sort of social dictate, pressure by society that wants us to have children when we're young. My whole keeps asking me, 'So, when are you going to give a grandchild?' [...] It always makes me laugh and I reply, 'Maybe I'll have a kid when you stop asking me.' Perhaps, at that point, we'll seriously consider it."*

## France

- ❖ Differences in active and passive logics of adaptations reflect a more heterogeneous young society;
- ❖ They are some of the consequences of skill-centred LM and strong reproduction of inequalities within generations;
- ❖ Achievement of adulthood by labour market integration at any cost because it endows a social status, which is considered a key-element of personal development;
- ❖ The logic of social integration stems from the conception of youth “as the age of the definitive choice”;
- ❖ 1<sup>st</sup> home-leaving transition = an experimental phase, but not for all them, and coming back is a personal failure for some of them;
- ❖ Reversible trajectories with turning point and fragility point;

## Italy

- ❖ Being flexible = being precarious;
- ❖ While some «throw in the towel» and accept the bitter reality, others actively turn things around and «leap before they look» , and hope for the best;
- ❖ The permanent contract is always desirable because their country’s entire system work according to organisation logics of Fordism’s;
- ❖ The Italian logic of “Settling down or the logic of family membership” lead to situations of prolonged permanence in the family home;
- ❖ However, delayed departure no longer means that young Italian adults have to comply with an archaic family model;
- ❖ The absence of policies that make longer permanence at home socially acceptable.



A low-angle photograph of a modern glass skyscraper, showing the intricate grid of windows and the blue sky in the background. The image is split vertically, with the top half showing the building's facade and the bottom half showing a similar view from a slightly different angle.

*Thank you for your attention!*