Why Spanish youngsters remain at parental home until so late?

1. Background

According to European Union Household Panel data, Spain is the country where young people remain for longer at parental home, although the situation in Portugal, Italy, Greece and Ireland is pretty closer. On contrast, in central European countries and, specially, in northern European countries, young people leave home much more early (Iacovou, 1998). In fact, Spain is usually presented as good example on how late leaving home is seen as the best way for being ready for an optimal entrance into adulthood. This concern is especially present in a context with high cost of housing, extension of higher education and increasing uncertainties in employment.

New Household Economics (based in Human Capital Theories) states than individual social prestige is connected with the previous educational investment (Becker, 1991): it is assumed that someone gets to a certain position in the prestige scale according to the effort and benefits directly obtained from education. It is a fact that in Spain younger generations have improved dramatically their educational level. And it has a gendered effect in family formation, as the opportunity cost of delaying a promising professional career for higher educated women lead them to a parallel delaying in family formation patterns. Consequently, the more educated is a woman, the lower is her probability of being in a partnership.

Nevertheless, according to Catherine Hakim (2003), the individual value system overcomes the opportunity cost, that is, women can choose among being home-centred (putting family first), work-centred (considering professional career as a top priority) or allow adaptation of both spheres. Consequently, the effects from educational attainment have an effect just on women who are from younger ages in the labour market.

On contrast, Peter McDonald (1997) states than in certain cultural universes as the one find in Southern European countries, complementary gender roles model is accepted in some social institutions as Education or Labour, but not in others as Family, provoking a contradiction between family life and professional career virtually insuperable.

2. Source, model of analysis and methodology

We pool together data from two sources: the 1991 Spanish Sociodemographic Survey (a retrospective survey that draw the evolution from 1940 to 1990) and the Spanish Labour

Force Survey (used cross-sectional from 1990 to 2003). We elaborate comparable variables for both data sources. Using discrete-time event-history analysis and considering year-periods as the time variable (Allison, 1984), each individual, iregardingly which data set is being used, will be match with his or her anniversary at any specific observational year.

As a depended variable, we will consider four complementary living situations, that is, 1) non-partnered living with parents, 2) partnered and living independently from parents, 3) neither partnered nor living with parents and 4) both partnered and living with parents.

For each birth cohort, it has been computed the number or years-person living in each situation among the age range from 21 to 35 years olds (table 1). With the sources that have been used, the younger birth-cohort that can be considered up to 35 years is 1968, who were 35 years old in 2003.. Thus, grouping birth-cohorts in five years group, we will analyse from 1924-28 till 1964-68 birth-groups. Moreover, those born in 1969-73 can be followed till they were 30 and those born in 1974-78 until they were 25.

Table 1. Percentage of years spent in each living situation from 21 to 35 years old by birth-cohorts. Spanish females

	Parents Partner	with without	without with	without without	with with	TOTAL
MALES	1924-28	44	38	9	10	100
birth-cohort	1929-33	43	40	8	10	100
	1934-38	39	43	8	10	100
	1939-43	31	50	8	11	100
	1944-48	23	59	6	12	100
	1949-53	29	55	5	11	100
	1954-58	43	44	4	9	100
	1959-63	55	34	4	7	100
	1964-68	63	29	4	4	100
FEMALES	1924-28	32	49	7	12	100
birth-cohort	1929-33	31	48	6	15	100
	1934-38	27	52	5	16	100
	1939-43	21	57	5	17	100
	1944-48	15	64	4	16	100
	1949-53	17	65	5	13	100
	1954-58	27	57	5	10	100
	1959-63	37	49	5	8	100
	1964-68	47	42	5	6	100

The percentage of years from 21 to 35 years olds residing with parents and without a partner has been halved between 1924-28 and 1944-48 birth cohorts: from 44% till 23% for male and from 32% till 15% for females (table 1). Complementary, percentages for the number of years living with a partner and independently from parents have been increasing (although not doubled) for the same generations, from 38% till 59% for men and from 49% till 64% for women. In parallel, the other two considerate living situations were quite stable, involving for those birth-cohorts around 10% of years-men and 15% of years-women spent living with both parents and partner, and around 5% and 8% respectively for males and females living independently from parents and non-partnered (table 1).

The inflexion point was marked by the 1949-53 birth-cohort, from which percentages of years living single with parents were raising quickly. Younger birth-cohorts analysed up to 35 years (those born in 1964-68) spent 63% of their live-time from 21 to 35 years in that situation if they were men and 68% if they were women (thus, this percentages were tippled). Complementary, to live outside parental home and with a partner was a living context which involved less time as young was a birth cohort, being this percentage for those born in 1964-68 of 29% for men and 25% for women. Moreover, both living independently by without a partner and partnered and with yours parents were falling, down to 4-5% for those born in 1964-68, irregardingly of sex.

3. Models and results

We present here the models elaborated for the probabilities of being single and living at parental home by age, birth-cohorts, educational attainment and labour force participation for Spanish women (table 2). The first conclusion is that the model has change quite considerably among birth cohorts, that is, aver time.

Indeed, once educational attainment and labour force participation have been controlled, age remains a fundamental variable to explain why a Spanish woman were single and living at parental home. Logically, the older was a female, the lower her probability of being single and at home. Moreover, the comparison among birth-cohorts lead to the conclusion that this probability has been rising over time, so we can assume that the younger was a birth-cohort, the harder the conditions it has to face to leave home. Nevertheless, this increase has been much more important for younger ages than for adults (graph 1). For instance, for 25 years-old women, the probability of being non-partnered and living with parents was 5 percentage points lover for those born at 1949-53 than for women born at 1954-58, being 10 percentage points higher for 1959-63 female birth-

cohorts and 15 higher for those born in 1964-68. But this difference was much lower for women around 30 years of age and virtually nil for those aged 35 years.

Moreover, generally speaking, the pattern for educational attainment leads to the conclusion that the higher it is, the higher the probability of staying single at parental home. And this model is even more clear and contrasted as younger is the birth-cohort considerate (table 2). For instance, for 1964-68 female birth-cohort, lower probabilities were for women with non studies (25%), followed by those with primary school (31%), but they were much more higher for women holding a second university degree (62%).

Finally, we should note than the model has certainly change over time regarding to the female labour force participation. Although the differences were spectacular for older female birth-cohorts, the trend is pointing to a progressive reduction of the importance for this variable. Nevertheless, for those women born in 1964-68, who have been followed up to 35 years old, the model still marked an important difference, as women within the labour market had a probability of being single and at parental home of 64%, but of 35% if they were inactive. Certainly, the Spanish model remains quite traditional.

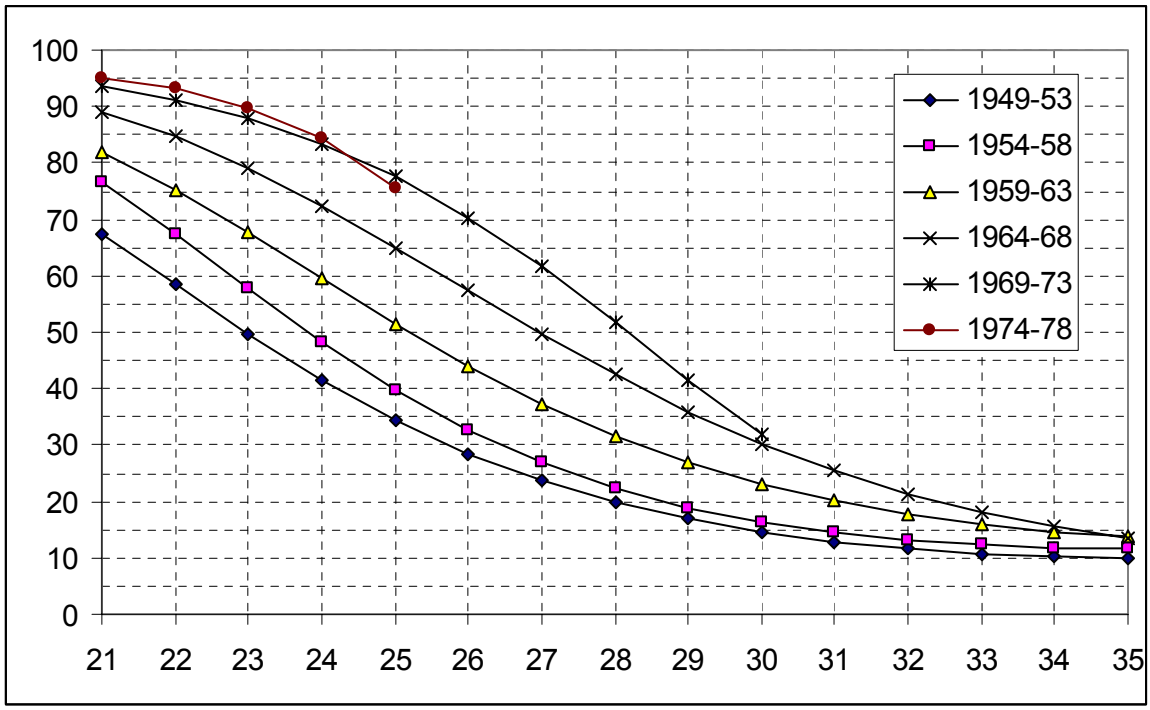
This paper is going to follow that research line, elaborating the model for the other three living situations and for men. Moreover, we would like to analyse if these models are specific for the different regions.

Table 2. Probabilities of being single and living at parental home by birth-cohort, according to educational attainment and labour force situation

BIRTH COHORTS	1949-53			1954-58			1959-63		
	coeff.	prob.(%)	p-value	B	prob.(%)	p-value	B	prob.(%)	p-value
AGE	-0,95		0,000	-1,17		0,000	-0,94		0,000
AGE SQUARED	0,01		0,000	0,02		0,000	0,01		0,000
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT									
Illiterate	1,15	75,93	0,000	1,19	76,65	0,000	1,20	76,93	0,000
No studies	-0,39	40,42	0,000	-0,68	33,60	0,000	-0,98	27,21	0,000
Primary	-0,09	47,80	0,000	-0,29	42,78	0,000	-0,57	36,13	0,000
High School	0,22	55,60	0,000	0,16	53,93	0,000	0,15	53,68	0,000
Vocational	-0,28	42,94	0,000	-0,36	41,10	0,000	-0,27	43,29	0,000
1r degree	-0,65	34,38	0,000	-0,36	41,22	0,000	0,02	50,41	0,000
2n degree	0,03	50,82	0,052	0,34	58,44	0,000	0,46	61,21	0,000
LABOUR FORCE SITUATION									
Non-active	-0,90	28,88	0,000	-0,75	32,12	0,000	-0,64	34,47	0,000
Active	0,90	71,12	0,000	0,75	67,88	0,000	0,64	65,53	0,000
Constant	14,83		0,000	18,33		0,000	15,80		0,000

BIRTH COHORTS	1964-68			1969-73			1974-78		
	B	prob.(%)	Sig.	B	prob.(%)	Sig.	B	prob.(%)	Sig.
AGE	-0,77		0,000	-0,15		0,000	0,98		0,322
AGE SQUARED	0,01		0,000	0,00		0,439	-0,03		0,004
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT									
Vocational	1,80	85,83	0,000	1,25	77,66	0,000	-0,27	43,40	0,000
1r degree	-1,08	25,41	0,000	-1,35	20,55	0,000	-1,53	17,77	0,000
2n degree	-0,78	31,48	0,000	-0,96	27,65	0,000	-0,93	28,25	0,000
Constant	0,05	51,26	0,000	0,20	54,95	0,000	0,41	60,13	0,000
0	-0,38	40,58	0,000	-0,31	42,22	0,000	0,13	53,37	0,002
0	-0,10	47,59	0,000	0,37	59,14	0,000	1,11	75,15	0,000
	0,48	61,81	0,000	0,81	69,28	0,000	1,08	74,60	0,000
LABOUR FORCE SITUATION									
Non-active	-0,57	36,02	0,000	-0,38	40,52	0,000	-0,10	47,46	0,000
Active	0,57	63,98	0,000	0,38	59,48	0,000	0,10	52,54	0,000
Constant	14,38		0,000	7,86		0,000	-3,81		0,101

Graph 1. Probabilities of being single and at home by age and birth cohort, once educational attainment and labour force participation have been control. Spanish women



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