



Spatial Mobility of Young Adults During the Transition to Adulthood in England and Wales

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Youth context. Media portraits

- High unemployment/
overqualified graduates
- “generation rent”
- “boomerangs” burdening the
“sandwich” generation



Disconnected Youth:
A problem hidden in
plain sight.

“twixters”; “perpetual postponers”
“parasite singles”



Individualisation of the life course

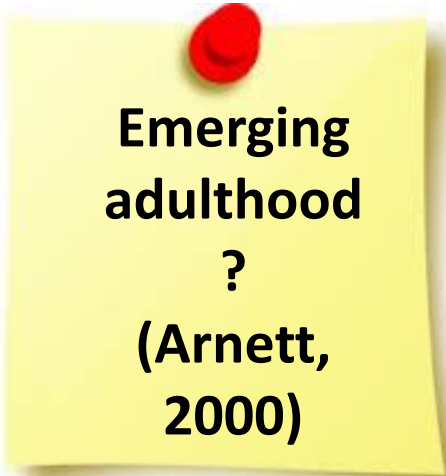
- Socio-economic changes triggered by the Second Demographic Transition (Lestaeghe & van de Kaa, 1986)) -> **de-standardisation and individualisation of life trajectories** (Buchman, 1989; Liefbroer, 1999; Schanahan, 2000; Macmillan, 2005)
- On the other hand, prevalence of **structured trajectories** defined by socio-economic origins is observed as well (Côté, 2002; Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Côté & Bynner, 2008; Furstenberg, 2008 ->

“Structured individualisation” - ?



Who are young adults?

Any specific age range? Any markers?
How do young people come of age?



**Emerging
adulthood
?
(Arnett,
2000)**



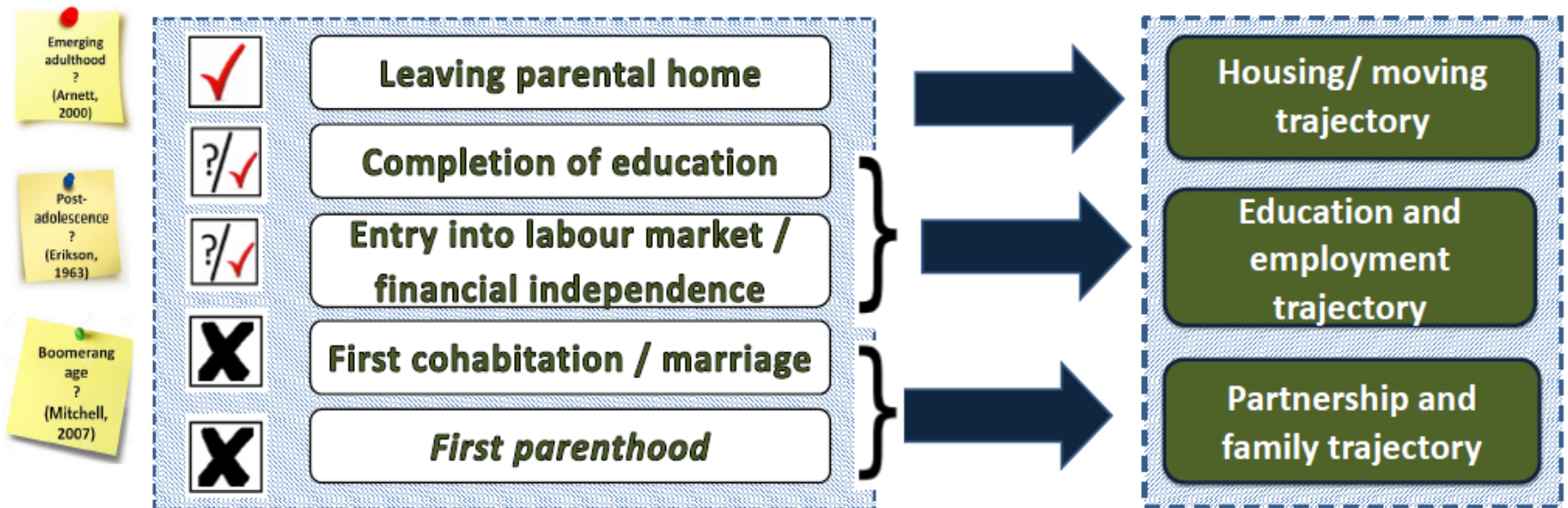
**Post-
adolescence
?
(Erikson,
1963)**



**Boomerang
age
?
(Mitchell,
2007)**

Markers of the transition to adulthood (from a demographic perspective)

Classical markers of the transition to adulthood



Still no defined age range!

Common Western European patterns



- o **Mediterranean pattern**

prolonged stay in the parental home +
synchronization between leaving home and marriage
(‘the latest-late’)

- o **French and Northern European pattern**

early household formation + delayed family formation
(‘the earliest-early’)

- o **British pattern**

early transitions from school to work +
heterogeneous household and family formation **(‘accelerated pathway’)**

(Cavalli & Galland, 1995)

* **Eastern European pattern** (if one exists)



The British pattern

...is usually described as '*accelerated*' one with **early transition from school to work,**

which stems from **open labour market relationships** based on free market forces and competition and a **flexible education and training system** that allows various pathways of obtaining necessary work qualifications (Blossfeld et al., 2005; Raffe et al., 1998; Bynner, 2001)

followed by **heterogeneous household and family formation**

(Cavalli & Galland, 1995; Bynner, 2001)



“Youth divide”

In Britain, life course trajectories of young people were found to be largely influenced by social class, gender, and ethnicity (Bynner, 2001, 2005; Cavalli & Galland, 1995; Coffield, 1995).

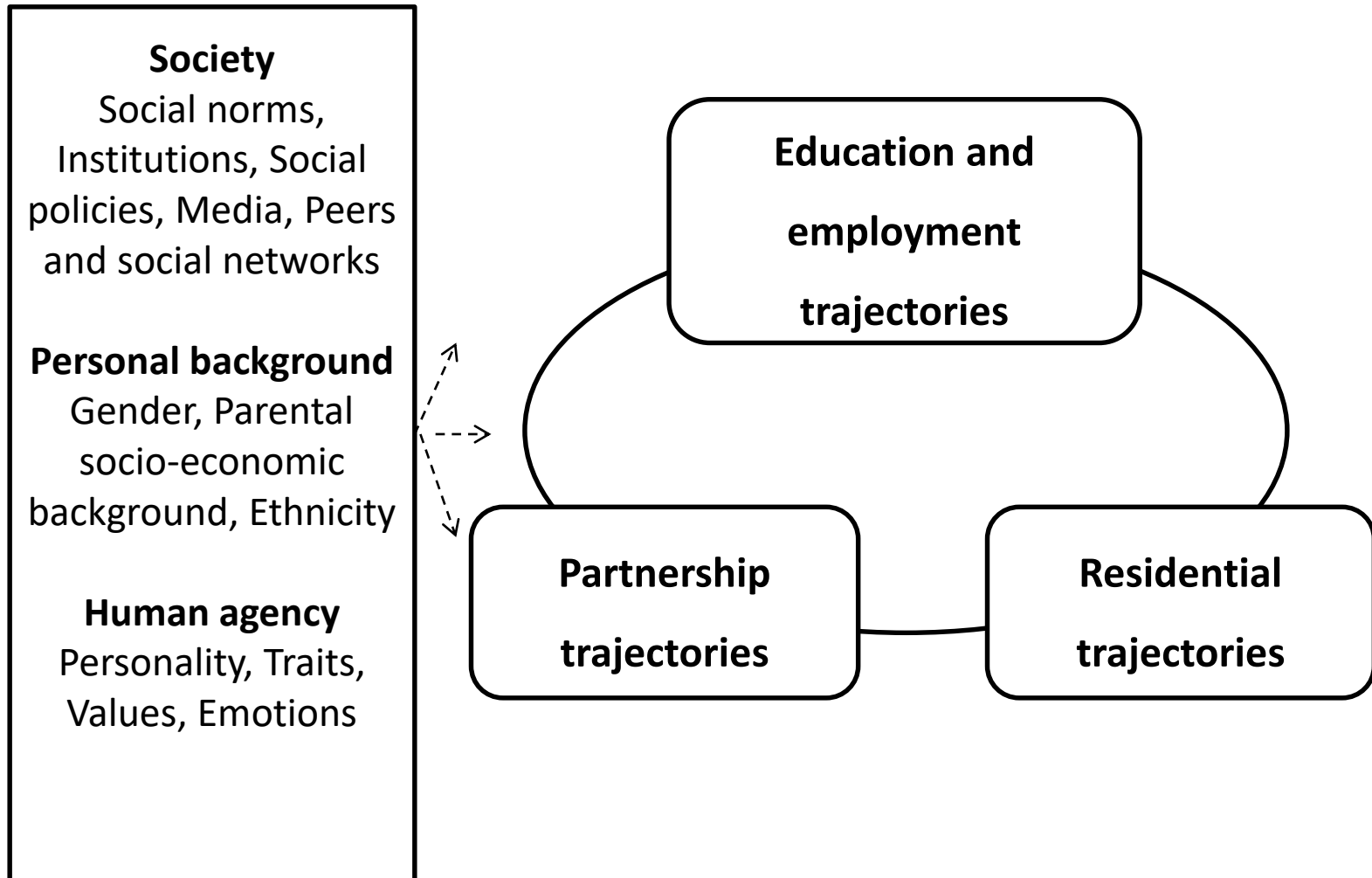
“Youth divide” – the polarisation between the advantaged and the disadvantaged – and the existence of so called “fast-” and “slow-track” in the transition to adulthood (Bynner 2001, 2005, Jones 2002).



Aims of the study

- *To study three main domains of the life trajectories of young people in England and Wales: education and employment, partnership, and residential careers.*
- *To investigate how the transition to adulthood in England and Wales is influenced by birth **cohort**, **parental socio-economic background** and **individual's life course characteristics**.*

A schematic presentation of the Life Course Theory applied to the Transition to Adulthood






Spatial mobility of young people

Leaving the parental home + Subsequent moves

2 types of moves:



Short-distance
(‘housing adjustment’)

Long-distance
(‘employment-led’)



Reasons/motives to move

Mobility “triggers”

Changes in **occupation, relationships, family extension and dissolution** (e.g. Mulder & Hooimeijer, 1999; Clark & Huang, 2004; Falkingham et al., 2016)

Environmental reasons

Personal preferences (neighbourhood; comfort; gentrification; studentification; city image) (e.g. Da Vanzo & Goldscheider, 1990; Duncan & Smith, 2006)

‘New mobilities paradigm’ (Sheller & Urry, 2006) and **‘lifestyle migration’** (Walford & Stockdale, 2015)

Social norms for leaving the parental home (Neugarten et al., 1965; Holdsworth & Morgan, 2005; Billari & Liefbroer, 2007)

Parental resources and expectations (e.g. Whittington & Peters, 1996; Goldscheider et al., 2001)



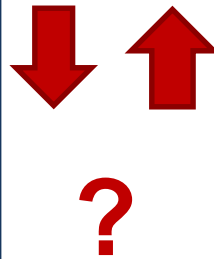
Gender differences

- **Females** traditionally have left the parental home earlier than males and **moved more often..** due to **family reasons** (Fielding & Halford, 1993; Berrington & Murphy, 1994).
- **“Tied movers”** and **“tied stayers”** (Boyle et al., 2001; Cooke, 2001, 2003).
- Expansion of HE and professionalisation of the labour market – move started moving more often for **career reasons** (e.g. Faggian et al., 2007)

Institutional background and its effect on spatial mobility

- Introduction of tuition fees in 1998
- Economic dependence on parents
- Unaffordable housing
- Increase in dual careers household

Generation of 'boomerangs' and 'stayers'?



- Expansion of higher education
- 'Professionalisation' and feminisation of the labour market
- Increase in cohabitation and separation

'The age of migration' and 'hypermobility'?



Research questions

- 1) How did mobility change across **cohorts**?
- 2) Are **females** still more likely to move than males?



Hypotheses. Cohort

- 1) We expect to observe the **postponement of leaving the parental home** among the **youngest cohort**.
- 2) Yet, we **do not** expect **lower mobility** among this cohort later on.



Hypotheses. Gender

- 1) We expect **females** to show **higher mobility** than males throughout the whole period.
- 2) We expect changes in other life course domains to **explain some of the cohort and gender differences** in mobility levels



Hypotheses. Life course events

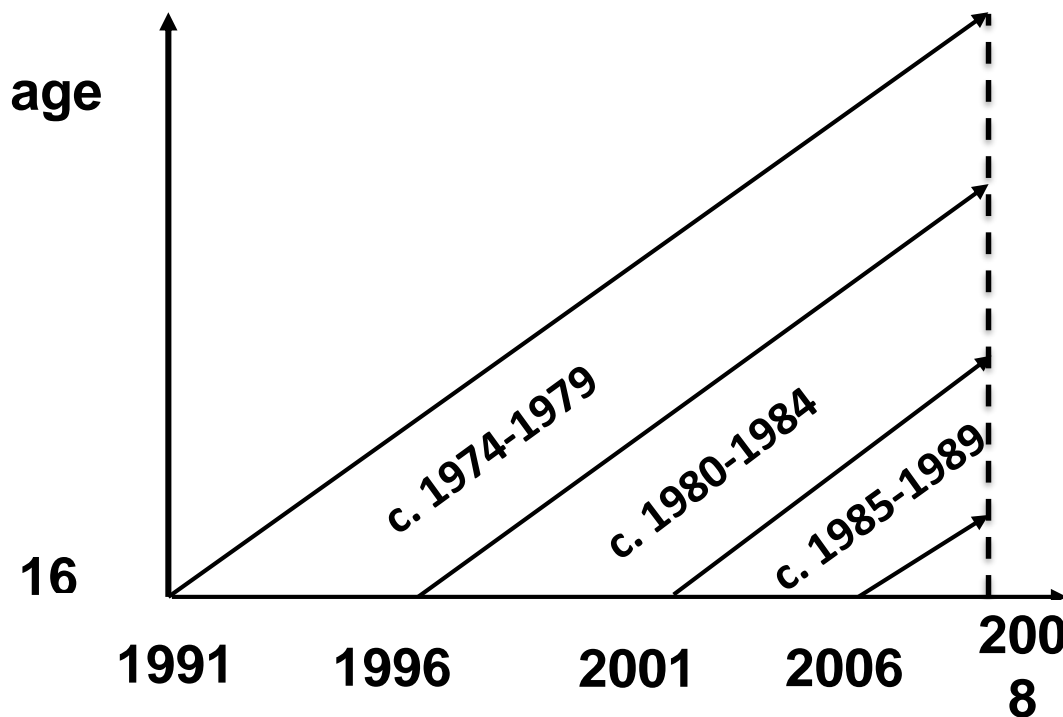
We expect **changes in educational enrolment and level, partnership status and economic activity** to **explain some of the cohort and gender differences** in long- and short-distance move.

How much variation in spatial mobility across birth cohorts and between males and females is left after accounting for changes in these life domains -?

Data

British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) 18 waves

Geography: England & Wales; Local authority districts data



Sample size: 2562

1289 men &
1273 women

3 birth cohorts:

- 1974-1979
- 1980-1984
- 1985-1989

Method

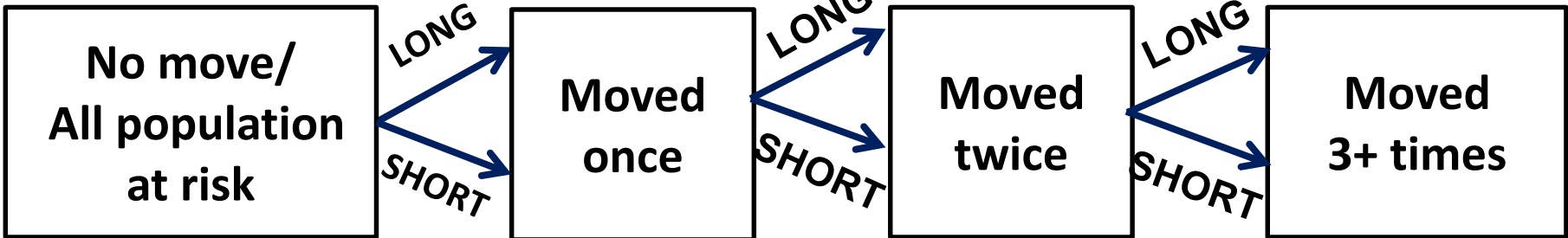
Multistate Event History Analysis

Competing risks for repeated events; PWC baseline

1st move

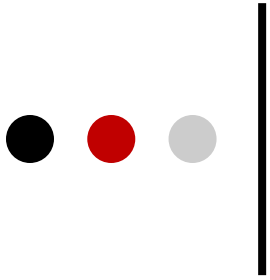
2nd move

3rd+ move



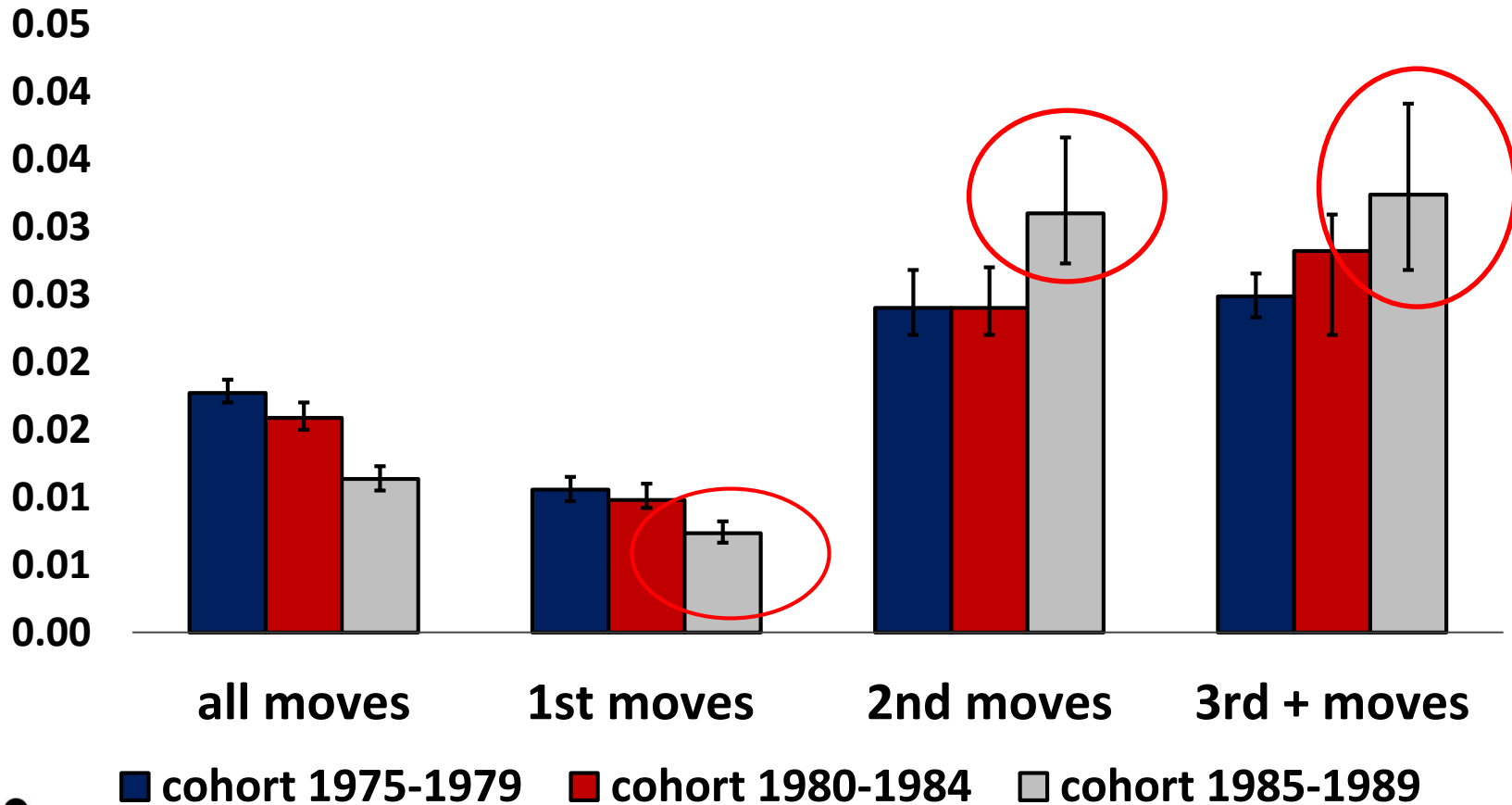
$$\ln \mu_{im}^{SD}(t) = y^{SD}(t) + \sum_k \alpha_k^{SD} x_{imk} + \sum_j \beta_j^{SD} (w_{imj} + t) + \varepsilon_i^{SD},$$

$$\ln \mu_{im}^{LD}(t) = y^{LD}(t) + \sum_k \alpha_k^{LD} x_{imk} + \sum_j \beta_j^{LD} (w_{imj} + t) + \varepsilon_i^{LD}$$



Testing hypothesis about the cohort changes in spatial mobility

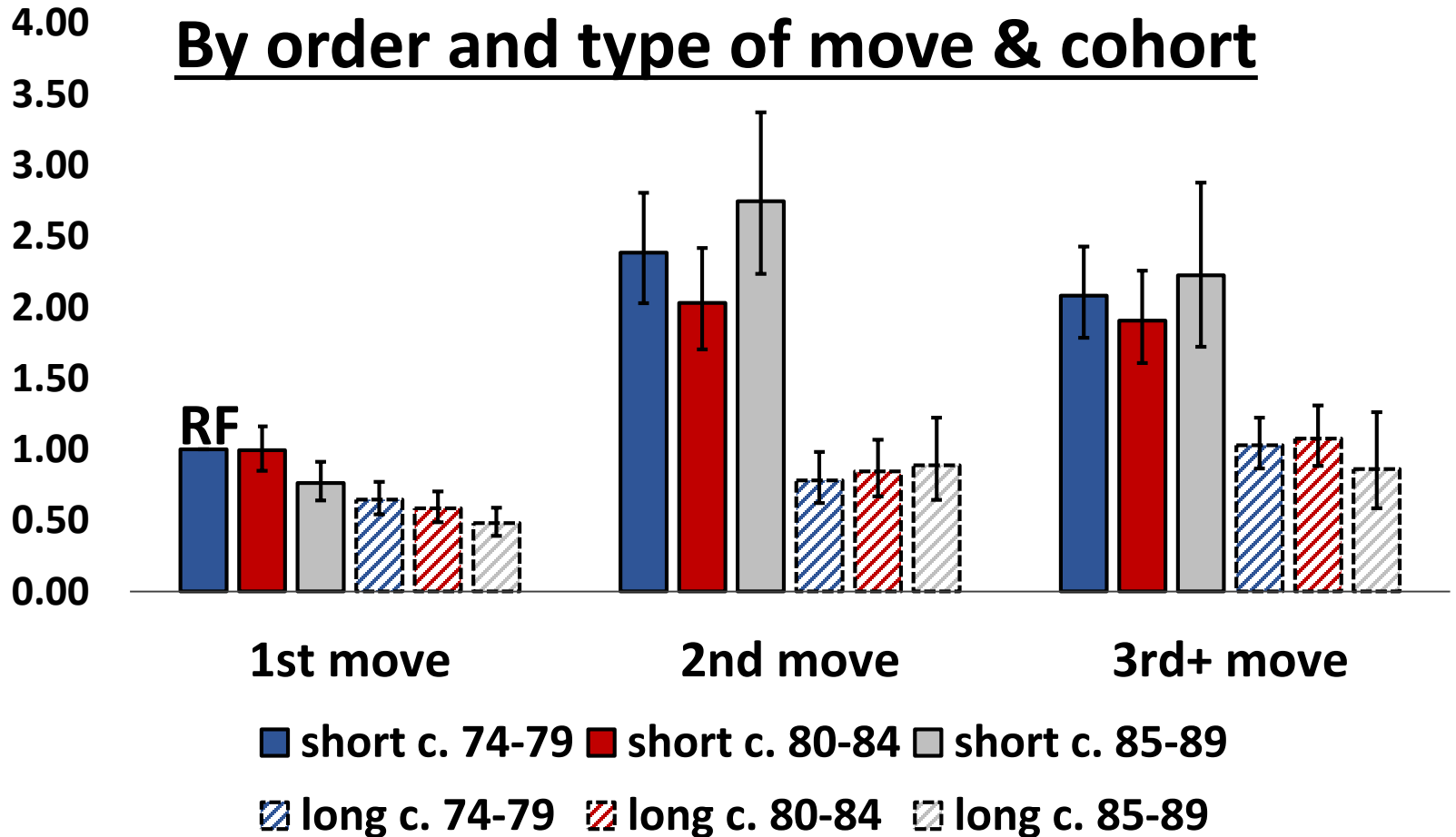
Descriptives. Order-specific hazard rates



Interaction effect I

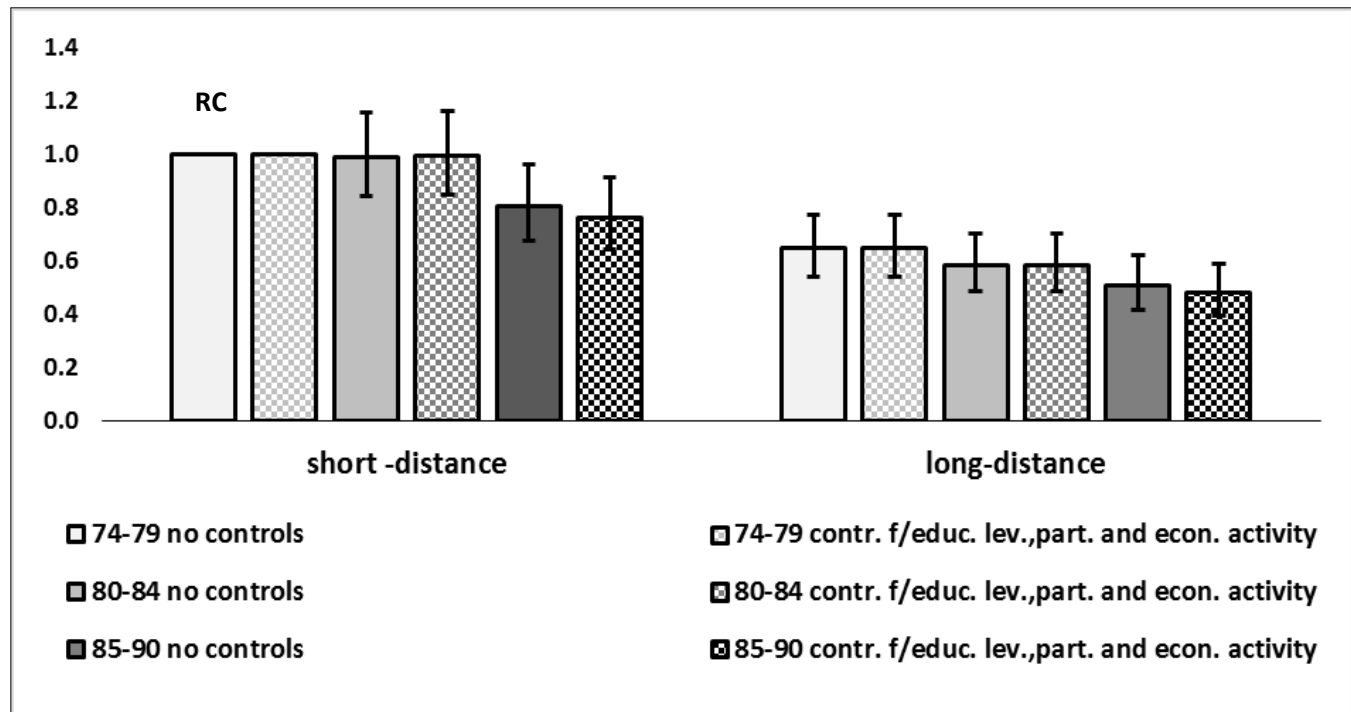
controlled for gender,
partnership and
economic activity
status, parental SES,
education level,
residential context

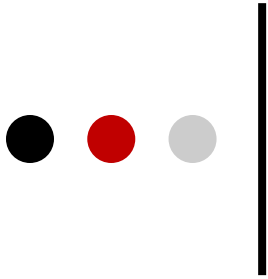
By order and type of move & cohort



Life course events




Standardised cohort differences in 1st short- and long- distance moves (by educational level, partnership and economic activity status status)





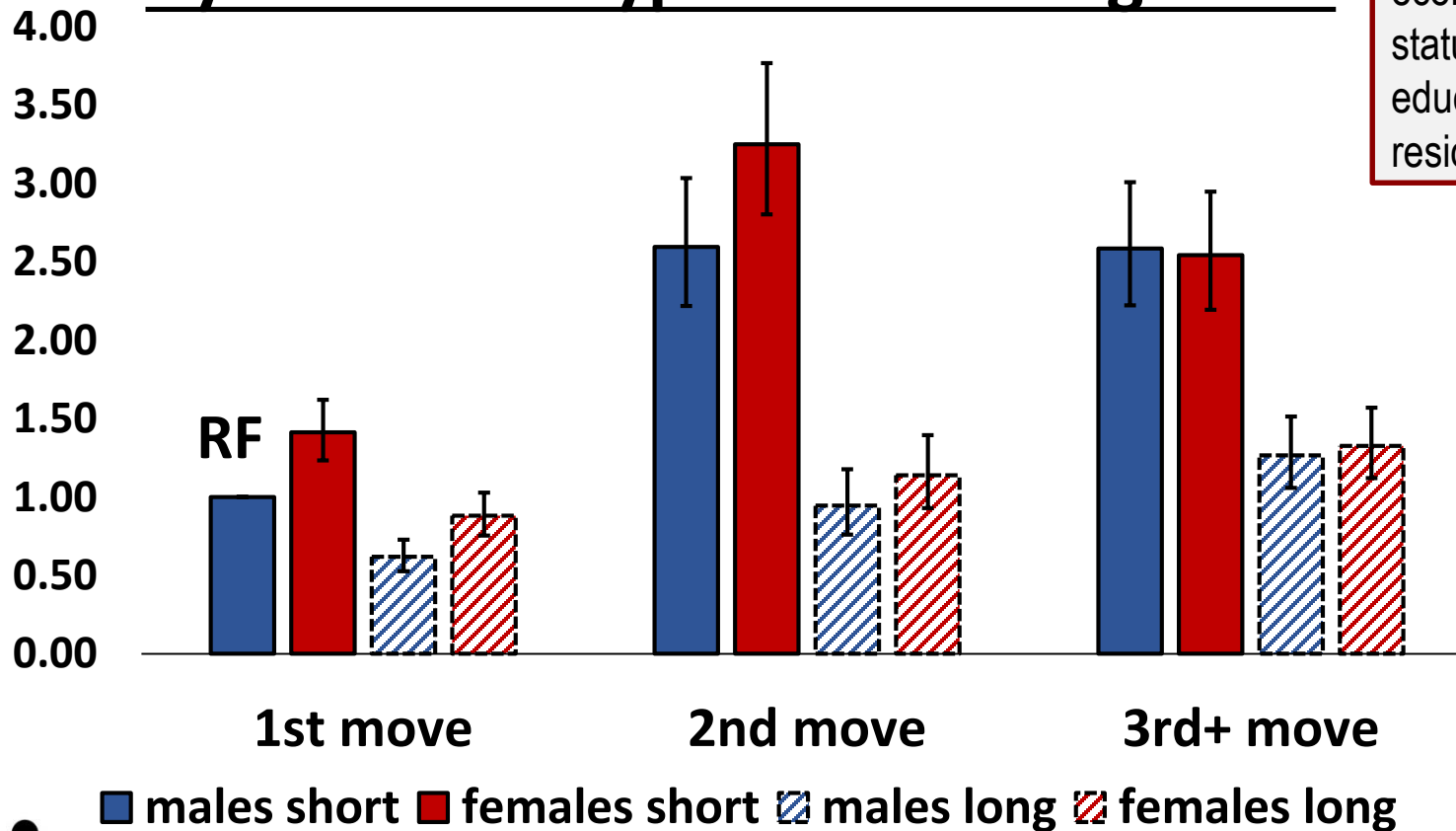
Testing hypothesis about the gender differences in mobility

Median age at 1st move by cohort and gender

Cohort	Gender	Age	Gap
All cohorts	females	20.9	1.9
	males	22.8	
c. 1974-1979	females	20.9	1.2
	males	22.1	
c. 1980-1984	females	20.8 	2.1 
	males	22.9	
c. 1985-1989	females	21.3 	2
	males	23.3	

Interaction effect II

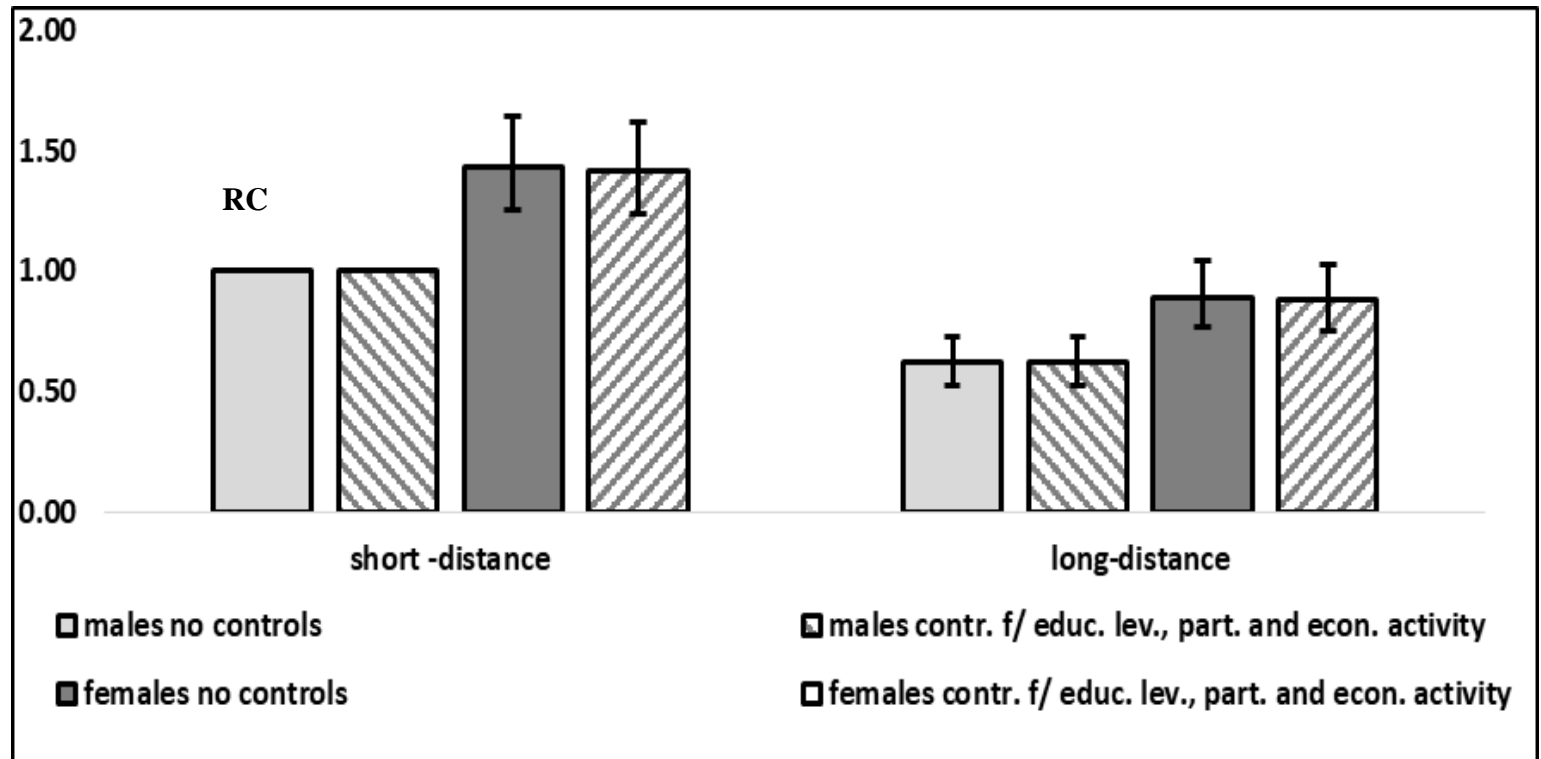
By order and type of move & gender



controlled for cohort,
partnership and
economic activity
status, parental SES,
education level,
residential context

Life course events II

Standardised gender differences in 1st short- and long- distance moves (by educational level, partnership and economic activity status)



Note: Males moving short distance first time were chosen as a reference category.

Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations.



Results. Cohort changes

- a. The **youngest cohort** indeed **postpones leaving the parental home** (~ by 1 year).
- b. Those who moved out in the future **show a tendency towards higher residential mobility** compared to older cohorts. This attributed mostly to **short-distance** moves.



Discussion

Some of the **cohort changes** are due to the expansion of higher education and spread of cohabitation. Controlled for both,

the youngest cohort shows a trend towards **further polarisation between 'movers' and 'stayers'**

Further polarisation between 'advantaged' and 'disadvantaged'?
new 'social norm' ?
lower quality and availability of housing ?



Results. Gender differences

- a. **Females leave** the parental home **earlier** than males.
- b. **By the higher order of moves (3rd+)** gender differences in mobility **disappear.**



Results. Gender differences

Some of the gender differences are due to females' earlier entry into partnership and higher participation rate in HE. Controlled for the partnership status and education level,

gender differences in 1st moves still exist, yet disappear by 3rd+ moves

Convergence of gender mobility patterns + **self-selection** among the more mobile?



For more details

Pelikh, A., & Kulu, H. (2018). Short- and Long-Distance Moves of Young Adults During the Transition to Adulthood in Britain.

Population, Space and Place 24; e2125

Or email me alina.pelikh@essex.ac.uk!



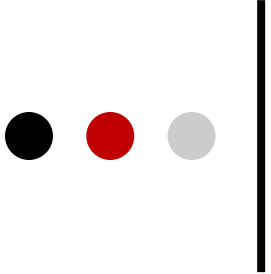
Acknowledgments

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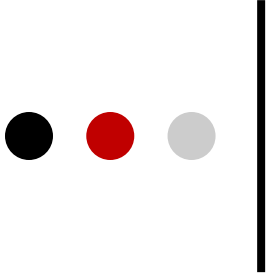
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