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Family structure and home-leaving: A life course perspective

**Research paper**

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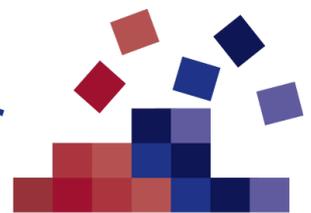
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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine whether the recent increase in divorces and remarriages, which has led to a growing complexity of the composition of household, is likely to affect the propensity of young adults leaving the parental home. The empirical research was based on the Cohort study, a panel survey that started in autumn 2013 in Switzerland. Two longitudinal statistical methods were used as complementary approaches. First, sequence and cluster analyses were conducted to identify typical trajectories of childhood family structure, the event history analysis was used to analyse the home-leaving process and to estimate whether these childhood family structures are likely to influence this aforementioned event. Analyses, which were based on retrospective longitudinal data, show that individuals from dissolved households, such as step- and single-parent families, have higher odds of leaving the parental home than those who grew up in intact households. Nonetheless, the effect of the stepfamily only becomes significant when the interaction with the sex of the respondent is taken into account. Lastly, there is some evidence that people who experience a transition from a non-standard family structure to a bi-parental household are as likely to leave home as those who grow up with their two parents. As leaving home very early might have negative consequences on later life opportunities, the findings draw attention to the fact that the family structure is a significant determinant of the transition toward a stable and successful work and family trajectory.

## Keywords

Family structure | Home-leaving | Life course | Switzerland

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## **1. Introduction**

According to Goldscheider and Goldscheider (1998), the recent and rapid increase in divorces and remarriages has led to a growing complexity in households' composition. Indeed, new family structures have emerged in the past few decades, such as stepfamilies and single-parent households. As a result, there are a growing number of children who no longer grow up in a home with two biological parents. Conforming to the aforementioned research, these increasingly common family patterns are likely to affect the ways in which parents invest in their children and, thus, the parents-children relations. Consequently, the aim of this article is to examine whether the aforementioned changing family structures, that are likely to affect the roles and status of numerous family members, may affect the decisions children make when they become adults.

According to Marini (1984), the transition from youth to adulthood may be marked by several interlinked events which induce a movement from economic dependence to economic independence. Likewise, it has also been stated that it might be marked by the departure from the family of origin to found one's own family. Five major transitions have been enumerated: the exit from school, the entry into the labour force, the departure from the family of origin, the marriage and the entry into parenthood (Modell, Furstenberg, & Hershberg, 1976). Thereby, the transition to adulthood can be seen as "*a series of ordered stages through which an individual passes in his or her life and which are associated from one stage to the next with age*" (Hogan & Astone, 1986: 110). However, the aim of this article is not to study the transition to adulthood as a set of experiences and status changes, but to focus on one of them: the home-leaving. Indeed, leaving home can be seen as a significant symbol of the transition to adulthood and may be considered as a prerequisite to achieve other life transitions, such as marriage and parenthood (Mulder, 2009). In this way, this analysis aims to give an illustration of the importance of the family structure prevailing during childhood as a significant determinant of the transition toward a stable and successful work and family trajectory (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1998).

## **2. Conceptual framework**

### *2.1 Why study the departure from the parental home?*

In the past few decades, a growing number of researchers have devoted particular attention to the departure from the parental home. This growing devotion comes from the fact that the

departure from the parental home is one of the main, and very often one of the first, components of the transition to adulthood (Schizzerotto & Lucchini, 2004). As a result, it may have significant consequences for important areas of policy, such as the demand for housing (Ermisch & Di Salvo, 1997) and the risk of poverty among young people (Iacovou, Aassve, & Davia, 2007). This increasing interest can also be explained by the fact “*both the destination and the timing of young people’s home-leaving are likely to be crucial in determining later life opportunities*” (Buck & Scott, 1993: 863). Indeed, there is a common belief according to which age norms define the appropriate timing at which major life events should occur (Billari & Liefbroer, 2007). They also provide guidance and regulations throughout the life course of individuals (Heckhausen, 1999). Nevertheless, Aassve, Arpino, and Billari (2013) have demonstrated that differences in age norms exist both between and within countries. Divergences in terms of earnings, employment rates, education system, state welfare system and social norms can be cited to explain this heterogeneity. As a consequence, in each country there is a distinct definition of when it is too early or too late to leave home, even though some variations can also be observed within each society. Indeed, there is some evidence that the home-leaving patterns which do not respect the age norms are likely to have negative consequences on the subsequent life courses. On the one hand, leaving home too early might have a negative impact on the professional and family trajectories of young adults that will, in turn, threaten their subsequent success and stability (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1998). As an illustration, it has been demonstrated that leaving home too early is likely to reduce education aspirations and attainments (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1993). This could stem from the fact that young adults who leave home before the end of high school tend to forgo education for work (Mitchell, Wister, & Burch, 1989). On the other hand, leaving the parental home at a later age is likely to delay marriage and childbearing (Chiuri & Del Boca, 2010). Concerning women, a higher age at first birth may have an influence on the total number of children, but it might also affect birth weights and birth defects (*Ibid.*). Regarding men, a protracted transition to adulthood might also have negative consequences on the household division of labor. This means that the little experience of sharing household chores with a partner they accumulated over the years might negatively impact their wives’ labor supply, career and fertility, in particular in countries where child care services are less widespread and more expensive (Brodmann, Esping-Andersen, & Güell, 2007). Indeed, a recent study has demonstrated that Southern European husbands participate less equally to housework tasks, and that this excessive burden on women is strongly associated with low fertility (Rosina, 2005).

## 2.2 *The Swiss context*

Even though leaving home is considered in many countries as one of the main events that define the concept of “adulthood” (Billari & Liefbroer, 2007), it has been demonstrated that its process may vary from one country to another. As a consequence, it is necessary to take into account the specific national context in which the present study has been conducted. In Switzerland, leaving home tends to occur early and it often happens simultaneously with the first integration of the labour market (Thomsin, Le Goff, & Sauvain-Dugerdil, 2004). For instance, Schumacher, Spoorenberg and Forney (2006) have shown that in Switzerland the median age at home-leaving for the cohort born in 1976-87 is equal to 23. This situation has to be seen in the light of the Swiss education system, which as in Germany is a largely apprenticeship-based system of education (Thomsin et al., 2004). Indeed, in Switzerland almost 70 percent of every cohort of students who achieve a compulsory education enters a vocational education and training program (Meyer, 2003). This latter is also known as the “*dual education system*”. While the apprentice spends most of his/her time working for an approved company, he/she attends a vocational school for 1-2 days per week. As the apprentice is simultaneously studying and working, he/she receives a salary (though it is modest). Also, the professional stabilisation of the young apprentice is quite quickly attained. Indeed, young adults enter such an education at age 15. As the vast majority of such vocational training lasts 3 or 4 years, many of them can fully enter the labor market from the age of 18, or even 15 if one views the apprenticeship as integration into the labour market. Furthermore, there is some evidence that unmarried cohabitation has progressively emerged as the most frequent form of living arrangements (Thomsin et al., 2004). Consequently, the Swiss model of home-leaving appears as a combination of two other European models as defined by Galland (1993). On the one hand, it shares similitudes with the Northern model, which is characterized by an extension of the extra-marital life. On the other hand, the Swiss model is also close to the British system, which is marked by a precocious entry into the labour force and by the extension of the unmarried cohabitation without children.

Nonetheless, we have to keep in mind that leaving home does not necessarily lead to a neglect of family ties and to a lack of parental care (Zorlu & Mulder, 2011). Indeed, geographic distances are small in Switzerland, even more so for the migrant population who tend to be concentrated in large urban centres. Consequently, living away from home, but at a small distance, enables the young adults to escape from daily parental surveillance, but, at the same time, it also allows them to benefit regularly from parental support.

### *2.3 Family structure and home-leaving*

A significant number of studies have demonstrated that the family structure has a significant influence on the propensity of young adults to leave home (Mitchell et al., 1989; Aquilino, 1991; Mitchell, 1994; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1998). Based on an analysis of the literature, four main family types can be distinguished.

First and foremost, the number of divorces has experienced a strong increase in Switzerland over the past 40 years, even though the divorce rate has been decreasing slightly since 2005 (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2015). However, growing up with two biological parents is still the most common form of living arrangements. As reported by many social researchers, closer family bonds and the physical presence of both biological parents often induce a delayed departure from the parental home (Mitchell et al., 1989; Aquilino, 1991; Mitchell, 1994; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1998). As such, young adults who spent most of their childhood in such family structures are expected to be among the last to leave home.

Secondly, the single-parent family can be considered as an alternative form of family structure ensuing mainly from the increase of divorces. In this situation, the custodial parent – in many cases the mother - often has to increase his/her activity rate to compensate for the economic loss that generally results from divorce (Acock & Demo, 1994). As a consequence, the time he/she spends with his/her child is reduced and this latter is likely to suffer from a lack of support and attention. This deteriorating family environment can reduce the attractiveness of staying in the parental home. The family disruption may also lead the individual to think of him/herself as an independent unit from the family. Therefore, it might hasten the transition to adulthood. What is more, it is commonly agreed that one of the major difficulties encountered by those families are financial. It is thus not surprising that young people who grow up in this environment are by far the most economically disadvantaged. As a consequence, a significant number of studies conducted in many countries consistently show that children of divorced parents leave home at a younger age than those from intact families (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1998; Bernhardt, Gähler, & Goldscheider, 2005; Cherlin, Kiernan, & Chase-Lansdale, 1995; Holdsworth, 2000 ; Juang, Silbereisen, & Wiesner, 1999). Nonetheless, as stated by Mitchell et al. (1989), this ascertainment is more linked to the family socioeconomic status than to the absence of one of the parental figures. Indeed, the presence at home of young adults can be considered as a financial burden for the lone parent. Therefore, their departure from the parental home might reduce this strain (Mitchell, 1994). Regarding young adults who have grown up in a single-parent household from birth, Aquilino (1991) has demonstrated that their likelihood of leaving home does not differ from that of

those who have grown up in an intact family. Consequently, in addition to the type of family structure, we can assume that the stability of the childhood family structure also has an impact on the timing of home-leaving.

Thirdly, children who have been raised in a stepparent family are more likely to leave home sooner than their counterparts who grew up with a lone-parent or with both biological parents (Mitchell et al., 1989; Aquilino, 1991; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1998; Kiernan, 1992). Having to welcome a new parental figure and often new siblings and/or half-siblings into one's home may make young adults feel that leaving home would lead to an enhancement of their situation in comparison with remaining at home (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1998). Indeed, they might not tolerate having to share the attention, love and material support that once were theirs with complete strangers. As a consequence, severe conflicts and disagreements within stepfamilies have been enumerated as playing a significant role in early nest-leaving (Gähler & Bernhardt, 2000). Likewise, having stepchildren has been enumerated as one of the major sources of marital instability for remarried couples (White & Booth, 1985). As such, stepparents might be strongly motivated to push their children toward early independence.

Fourthly, there might be some circumstances in which both intact and non-intact families may no longer be able to maintain their household. In such situations, both children and parents might seek shelter in someone else's household, in most cases into the house of the grandparents (Aquilino, 1990). This type of family arrangements is referred to as "extended family". Therefore, as having to move back with relatives is the result from financial difficulties, it might push children to establish earlier an independent household.

To summarize, we could say that the differences in dynamics related to staying or leaving home between young adults from intact and dissolved families can be the result of divergences regarding economic factors and quality of relations. However, it could also be linked to parental investment. Indeed, concerning single-parent households, sociologists and developmental psychologists have shown that divorce is likely to reduce parenting skills and time investments. This can stem from the fact that, because single-parents tend to experience more stress, their capacity to support and nurture their children may diminish (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). Regarding stepfamilies, although they may seem similar to intact families in terms of monetary resources and availability of two parental figures, there is some evidence that parents in stepfamilies devote less time to their children and to their children's activities than parents from intact families (Morrison, Moore, Blumenthal, Coiro, & Middleton, 1994).

Moreover, it has been shown that stepchildren tend to receive less parental support for the pursuit of their higher education (Zvoch, 1999). This lower level of parental investment may be the result of ambiguity regarding parental roles and kinship obligations (Morrison et al., 1994). Indeed, the absence of biological bonds between stepchildren and stepparents could explain the lower level of emotional support from stepparents. Conversely, *“parents who wed and remain together have greater material resources from the start, have more human capital, are better able to collaborate, are more likely to be embedded in a system of social support, and probably have greater cognitive and social skills as well”* (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001: 448). As a consequence, intact families are better able to let their children stay at home, which can be considered as a mechanism to afford higher education, to pursue low paying or no-paying internships that boost their capital on labor market, or to save for a stronger launch when they do leave home. It can also be considered as a way for middle-class families to support young adults while they explore options.

#### *Other individual characteristics*

Even though the impact of family structure on leaving-home has been repeatedly demonstrated, it is also known that nest-leaving is associated with other variables, such as sex, labour force participation, geographical location and ethnic origin. As a consequence, these factors need to be integrated into a model that studies the relationships between family structures and nest-leaving.

Firstly, there is some evidence that sex has a significant discriminating influence on the departure from the parental home (Thomsin et al., 2004). Indeed, it has been shown that women leave home at an earlier age than men. For instance, according to Billari, Philipov and Baizán (2001), while the median age at first home-leaving for women is equal to 19.2 in Switzerland, that of men is slightly higher (21.5). This observation can result from the fact that, in agreement with Mitchell (1994: 666), *“the socialization process may perpetuate and reproduce traditional behaviours for each sex, so that some women place a greater value on family life than young men and marry at an earlier age”*. Indeed, the difference in age at first home-leaving by gender can be, without any doubt, explained by the difference in age at first marriage (Chiuri & Del Boca, 2010). Another reason for which women leave home at an earlier age might be that leaving home is a good means to escape the closer surveillance and control that weigh on them when they are still living at home. Furthermore, as far as the family structure is concerned, it has been shown that the stepfamily effect has a divergent influence on home-leaving according to sex. Indeed, whereas having an involved stepfather

can be considered as a benefit for young boys, stepdaughters encounter much more difficulties when their stepfather attempts to get involved in child-rearing (Aquilino, 1991; Buck & Scott, 1993; Cooney & Mortimer, 1999). In other words, while daughters seem to adjust better to a family environment where divorced mothers do not remarry, sons tend to benefit from the acquisition of a stepfather. Lastly, there is some evidence that living in an extended family only has an effect on women (Aquilino, 1991). As a reminder, an extended family is a family that goes beyond the nuclear family. It is often composed of grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins, all living under the same roof. Thus, whereas young girls from an extended family structure are expected to leave home at an earlier age, I make the assumption that boys will not be affected by this family environment. To summarize, girls who have either grown up with two biological parents, in a step-household or in an extended family are expected to leave home at an earlier age than boys. Nonetheless, the opposite effect is presumed in a lone-parent household.

Second, if one assumes that leaving home requires at least a minimum amount of financial resources, economic independence may be seen as a significant prerequisite for moving out of the parental home (Nilsson & Strandh, 1999; Aassve, Billari, & Ongaro, 2001; Jacob & Kleinert, 2008; Couppié & Gasquet, 2009). Nevertheless, obtaining employment might also cause the departure from the parental home (*Ibid.*). Indeed, if a young adult finds employment in a different city to the one in which he/she is living, he/she will have to move out in order to live closer to his/her work place. Alternatively, people residing in isolated areas may also be forced to move out from the parental home in order to access better work opportunities.

Thirdly, residential location is also a determining factor for home-leaving because of its influence on the availability of educational and work opportunities, and housing markets (Mulder & Hooimeijer, 1999; Mitchell, 1994). Consequently, as mentioned beforehand, people living in isolated areas may be forced to move out from their hometown in order to benefit from better job and education opportunities. They are, thus, more likely to leave the parental home at an earlier age.

Lastly, the ethnic origin of young adults is also expected to have a significant effect on their propensity to leave home. Indeed, as asserted by Giuliano (2007), the second-generation immigrants are more likely to follow the patterns of leaving home that are dominant in the home country of their parents than those who are typical of their host country, independently of their economic and educational backgrounds. As a result, it has been shown that children of Italian and Spanish migrants tend to leave home later than children of Swiss natives (Bolzman, 2007). According to a certain number of studies conducted in Switzerland, two

factors can explain the behaviour of these specific national communities. Firstly, a delayed departure from the parental home may be due to a lack of economic resources. Indeed, as a significant number of families from a migratory background belong to the lower classes, they often cannot afford to pay several rents at the same time. Secondly, it has been demonstrated that the values conveyed by the parents tend to vary according to the country in which they were raised. There is some evidence that, in migrant families, the departure from home is only considered when children acquire economic independence and are, thus, able to found their own household (Bolzman, Fibbi, & Vial, 2003). This requirement probably stems from the first argument which is that these families cannot afford to pay simultaneously several rents. These aforementioned observations corroborate the model developed by Reher (1998) on family systems. He makes a distinction between a Nordic family system with weak ties, where the individual and individual values have priority over everything else, and a Southern family system with strong ties, in which the family group dominates the individual (*Ibid.*). According to Granovetter (1973: 1361), “*the strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie*”. Consequently, the definition of the Nordic family system as a system with weak ties does not mean that there are no relationships among family members, but that they are less strong than in the Southern family system. Indeed, at a general level, family ties are one of the strongest social ties, though some cultural variations can exist. What is more, as demonstrated by the study of Luetzelberger (2014) on high-educated students in Italy and Germany, Reher’s family system is just as topical as ever. Concerning the population hailing from the Balkan Peninsula, Mandic (2008) shows that people from Eastern Europe present home-leaving patterns that are quite similar to their Southern peers, even though they leave the parental home at a slightly higher age than the latter. As a consequence, I make the assumption that the propensity to leave home will diverge according to the ethnic origin of young adults, even if they grew up in the same country. Nonetheless, I suppose that the main distinctions will be found between the Swiss natives and the second-generation immigrants from Southern or Eastern Europe. However, I assume that, in comparison with the Swiss natives, the Eastern Europeans will be slightly less likely to leave the parental home than their Southern peers. The rest of the population from a Northern European and Northern American background will probably not significantly differ from their native counterparts as their cultural systems are not very dissimilar. A significant number of studies conducted in Switzerland on the second-generation immigrants have focused on the periods of infancy and adolescence (Bolzman et al., 2003). Nonetheless, little

consideration has been given to the impacts of the ethnic origin on family life events. One of the main reasons is that the population from a foreign background is often hard to reach, because it is not easily distinguishable. Also, it is often difficult to find studies in which there is information about the ethnic origin of respondents and about the various family events that they encountered over their lifetime. For these reasons, the sample that has been used for the analyses was very adequate. Indeed, as it will be explained in the following section, it did not only allow me to distinguish the second-generation immigrants from the Swiss natives, but it also enabled me to define precise ethnic origin categories. In other words, I did not consider the second-generation immigrants as an entity, rather as a population that can be composed of various ethnic groups which do not necessarily share the same cultural values.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Data**

The analyses used data from the Cohort study<sup>i</sup>, a panel survey whose first wave was conducted from mid-October 2013 to the end of June 2014 (Elcheroth & Antal, 2013). The sample was composed of 1691 respondents, among which 415 were Swiss and 1276 were from a foreign background. Various criteria had to be fulfilled in order to be eligible, such as being a Swiss resident and being aged 15-24 on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013. Also, respondents had to have begun attending a Swiss school before the age of 10. Regarding people of foreign origin, only those whose parents were born in a foreign country and arrived in Switzerland after the age of 18 were taken into consideration. What is more, whether naturalized or not, the second-generation immigrants were overrepresented and a particular attention was paid to offsprings of low- or middle-skilled migrants who mainly hailed from Southern Europe or from the Balkan Peninsula. The aim of this study is to follow those people over at least ten years in order to study their transition to adulthood.

This survey distinguishes itself by its particular sampling process which is very similar to respondent-driven sampling, a method often used to contact hidden populations who are hard to reach, such as drug addicts. This method selects an initial randomly chosen sample which serves as an initial contact to access a particular type of population (Heckathorn, 1997). Concerning the Cohort study, the Federal Statistical Office selected around 4000 people from the Federal Resident Registration. Then, from these latter, a random sampling with unequal probability of respondent selection was generated which means that, each time, the second-

generation immigrants were more likely to be selected. In order to be more likely to reach this type of population, the selection process depended on various criteria. Indeed, the individuals who met the criteria had a higher probability of being part of the survey. First, people who held the nationality of one of the following countries - Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Spain, Italy, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia and Turkey – or who were born in one of these aforementioned countries had a higher probability of being selected. The resident permit was also a selection criterion. Indeed, it was assumed that a holder of a B or C resident permit was more likely to be a second-generation immigrant than someone who had the Swiss nationality. Lastly, the people residing in one of the thirty regions with the highest percentage of foreign-born residents - such as Lausanne, Geneva, Lugano etc. - also had a greater chance of being selected in the sample. Further, the selected respondents had to indicate the name of the people with whom they remembered having had a conversation at least once a week for the last three months. Then, from the network of each respondent, the second-generation immigrants were always more likely to be selected than the other eligible members. Thus, the people with the biggest social network were implicitly more likely to be selected.

Regarding the analyses, they were principally based on a life history calendar (LHC), which takes the form of a vertical grid where the columns are divided in life domains and the rows in years. The LHC used for the analyses relates principally to the areas of residency, living arrangements, intimate relationship, family history, work and education and, finally, health. As regards this article, there has been a focus on the trajectories of living arrangements that describe at each age the composition of the respondents' household.

### **3.2. Methods**

Over the past few years, the life course paradigm has arisen as a major discipline in sociology, which led to the improvement of methodological methods regarding longitudinal data analysis (Aisenbrey & Fasang, 2010). Since the life course perspective is based on two central concepts, it can be analysed in two different ways (*Ibid.*).

On the one hand, one could consider the life course as a holistic trajectory. Indeed, many social scientists assert that transitions cannot only be considered as a single change of status because they are often nonlinear, disordered, reversible, long-lasting and complex (Martin, Schoon, & Ross, 2008). Consequently, they should be studied in continuity. Therefore, sequence analysis appears as a suitable method because “*it does not just record transitions*

*from one state to the next, but also the timing, duration, order and reversibility of states and states changes*” (Martin et al., 2008). Sequence analysis was initially developed by molecular biologists whose aim was to compare DNA and protein sequences and to determine the distance between two DNA strands (Kruskal, 1983). Afterwards, Andrew Abbott re-applied it in social sciences for his work on the careers of musicians (Abbott, 1983). The objective of this method is, thus, to compare sequences of states, such as states of occupational status, and to figure out whether there are patterns among them (Abbott, 1995). Consequently, sequence analysis is composed of three steps. First, sequences of states are created. Second, a pairwise distance matrix describing how different each sequence is from the others is formed. In this paper, I used the optimal matching method (Abbott & Hrycak, 1990) with insertion/deletion cost of 4 and substitution cost based on transition rates. Finally, the closest sequences are gathered into clusters and the resulting clustering can be used as a dependent or independent variable (Abbott, 1995). Concerning the clustering method, which refers to the means by which the clusters are formed, a Ward clustering method has been used. This latter takes the form of an agglomerative hierarchical clustering (Yan, 2005). Namely, it starts with  $n$  clusters, each of them containing a single object in the data. Then, the two objects that have the closest between-objects distance are fused and are treated as a single cluster in the next step. The procedure continues until there is only one single cluster containing all the  $n$  objects. This process can be plotted in a dendrogram, a tree diagram frequently used to illustrate the arrangements of the clusters produced by hierarchical clustering. As a result, it indicates the optimal number of clusters into which the sequences can be gathered (Steinbach, Karypis, & Kumar, 2000).

On the other hand, the study of the life trajectory can focus on discrete transitions and, in this case, the timing and comparison of transitions are emphasized. Therefore, one has to resort to event history analysis, which is a commonly used term to describe a number of statistical methods designed to study the transition from one particular state to another one and the elapsed time until this transition (Abbott, 1995). Put differently, this method aims to describe, explain and predict the occurrence of events, an event being considered as a modification in a variable that occurs at a precise point in time (Blossfeld & Rohwer, 1995). What is more, event history analysis does not only inform us on the timing of occurrence of those events, but it can also be used to highlight the factors that are the most likely to influence the appearance of transitions. Concerning the sample presented in the previous section, the variables evolving over time are modelled in discrete time. This means that observations are separated into fixed intervals in time. Consequently, in order to perform a

causal analysis in discrete-time models, a binary logistic regression has been used (Yamaguchi, 1990).

To sum up, one could say that sequence analysis and event history analysis have two divergent objectives. Indeed, while the first method aims to compare individuals and to emphasize their resemblances, the second one intends to predict life course transitions. Consequently, another contribution of this article has been to use both approaches as two complementary methods. As previously mentioned, the objective was to determine whether the family structure individuals have experienced during their childhood are likely to influence the choices they make further on in life, such as their decision to leave home. As a consequence, sequence analysis was conducted to identify groups of typical trajectories of family structures in which people grew up during their childhood. Those latter will sometimes be referred as “family structures” later in the paper to simplify the text. On the other hand, event history analysis was used to analyse the home-leaving process and to estimate whether these trajectories of family structure were likely to influence the departure from the parental home. Nonetheless, using sequences of states to explain the occurrence of an event can appear problematic if the time frame of the sequence analysis overlaps that of the event history analysis. Indeed, we cannot estimate the probability of an individual leaving the parental home by taking into account changes in the family structure that have occurred at a later time. As an illustration, when we estimate the probability of an individual to leave home at the age of 15, we cannot take into consideration the fact that his/her parents divorced when he/she was 18, even if he/she did not leave the parental home until the age of 22. Indeed, the past cannot be explained by the future. For this reason, defining distinct time frames regarding both methods that would not overlap was a necessary step.

### **3.3 Operationalisation**

#### *Dependent variable: Home-leaving*

As postulated by Holdsworth (2000: 201), “*the process of leaving home is viewed as an integral part of establishing economic and emotional independence from the parental home*”. As a consequence, as long as the respondents were living with the members of their family of origin (siblings excepted), I defined this situation as “dependent”. On the other hand, the co-residency with siblings, children, partner or friends was considered as “independent”. In this way, I assumed that the financial dependence from one’s parents ends when one leaves the

parental home. In this way, a spouse who was cohabiting with his or her partner, but who was not working, was, nonetheless, considered as economically independent. Also, there could be some situations in which students were living by their own for education purposes, even though they were still economically supported by their parents. Indeed, I did not have any information on the financial support provided by parents to their children. As a consequence, some of the respondents could have been considered as economically independent even though they were not completely. Nevertheless, even if parents often continue to support their children when they leave home to get a higher education, a significant number of students work besides their studies (Mileti, Plomb, & Henchoz, 2015). As such, the departure from the parental home to pursue higher education could be considered as a transitional period toward economic independence. I created a variable “status”, equal to zero when the event had not yet occurred and to 1 when it had. All the episodes following the occurrence of the event have been removed from the database because I was only interested in the first departure from the parental home. As explained in the previous section, the time frame in which the event of interest may occur cannot overlap that of the trajectories of family structures. As the time frame of the sequence analysis lasted until the age of 14 (see below), I made the assumption that the individuals enter the risk period of experiencing the event at the age of 15. As a result, two departures from the parental home were not taken into account in the analyses. Consequently, during the observation period, 172 people experienced the event studied. This means that only 10% of the sample had already established an independent household at the time of survey. This low value could come from the fact that the respondents are very young. Indeed, the median age of the sample is equal to 19. It is maybe due to the fact that young adults still living at their parental home were easier to contact and had therefore a higher propensity to participate to the study. We also have to remember that the second-generation immigrants are overrepresented in the sample and that they are more likely to leave home at a later age than the Swiss natives.

*Independent variable: Trajectories of family structures*

According to Martinson and Wu (1992), a significant number of studies of childhood family structure are based on “snapshots” which only focus on a particular age, most often age 14. In my case, the Cohort study collected very detailed life history records of the composition of the respondents’ household at each age. Thanks to this information, I first built sequences of states that describe the family structure at each age in which the individuals grew up. As previously mentioned, from a methodological point of view, the time frame of

sequence analysis cannot overlap that of event history analysis. Consequently, as the risk period of experiencing the event of interest starts from the age of 15, I only took into account the sequences of states that described the family structure in which the respondents lived until the age of 14. Then, I resorted to optimal matching, that emphasized the resemblances between the sequences of states describing at each age the family structure in which individuals lived and gathered the closest sequences into clusters. One of the main problems of the life history calendar used in this survey is that it did not enable me to distinguish the extended family structure from the stepparent one. What is known is that the respondents, at a certain point in time, were living with one of their parents and other relatives, but what is not known is the nature of the family ties between those relatives and the respondents. This could be a grandparent, but it could also be a stepparent. Consequently, I was forced to gather them together in the same group. In the further figure, I used the “Average Silhouette Width” measure to order the sequences within the clusters. This measure, which has been developed by Kaufman and Rousseeuw (2009), “*is based on the coherence of the assignment of an observation to a given group, comparing the average weighted distance from the other members of its group and its average weighted distance from the closest group*” (Studer, 2013: 14). Consequently, this measure can be used to distinguish the sequences that are the most characteristic of a grouping. In the figure below, the most representative sequences of a cluster are represented at the top of each graphic, which means that they are close to the centre of their group but far from the closest group. By contrast, the sequences situated at the bottom of each cluster are poorly represented in this grouping (Cf. Figure 1). Based on the examination of the dendogram, a tree displaying the result of the Ward clustering method, it appeared that the data were separated into four mutually exclusive clusters.

1. *Biparental family* - The members of this cluster lived with their two parents and, sometimes, siblings from their birth until the age of 14. 1310 respondents are part of this cluster which represent almost 78% of the sample. This category was used as the category of reference in the regression analyses.

2. *From biparental to lone-parent family* – This category is composed of 190 individuals which correspond to 11% of the sample. Whereas most members of this group lived with their both biological parents for some years, the rest of their childhood was spent in a single-parent household which is mainly due to the marital disruption of their parents. However, this group also includes a small number of individuals who have

grown up in a lone-parent household from birth, though this only concerns 23 respondents.

3. *From non-standard family structure to biparental family* - The respondents of this category spent the first years of their childhood in a non-standard family structure. On the one hand, it can concern people who lived their first years with one of their parents, because they were temporarily separated or because one of them was not living in the same country. This situation can be quite frequent among the migrant population. On the other hand, it can also refer to individuals who spent the beginning of their childhood in an extended family, living with close relatives such as grandparents. Then, a transition toward a biparental family structure took place. Only 109 individuals belong to this cluster which amount to 6% of the population studied.

4. *Transition toward extended/stepparent family* – This last cluster is mainly composed of people who went from a biparental home to an extended/stepparent family structure. A smaller portion of members of this cluster experienced a period of lone-parenthood before living in an extended/stepparent family. Also, a significant number of them have lived all their childhood in an extended/stepparent household. Only 82 individuals are part of this grouping which only refer to less than 5% of the population studied.

To sum up, one could say that the below clustering provides an opposition between an absence of change (cluster 1) and presence of changes (clusters 2, 3 and 4). However, it goes beyond a simple opposition between two situations, such as the absence or the presence of a divorce or a separation. Indeed, the clusters give an illustration of the complexity of the family structure in which an individual can live. They can also be used to analyse the impacts those family structures have on the decisions children take when they become adults.

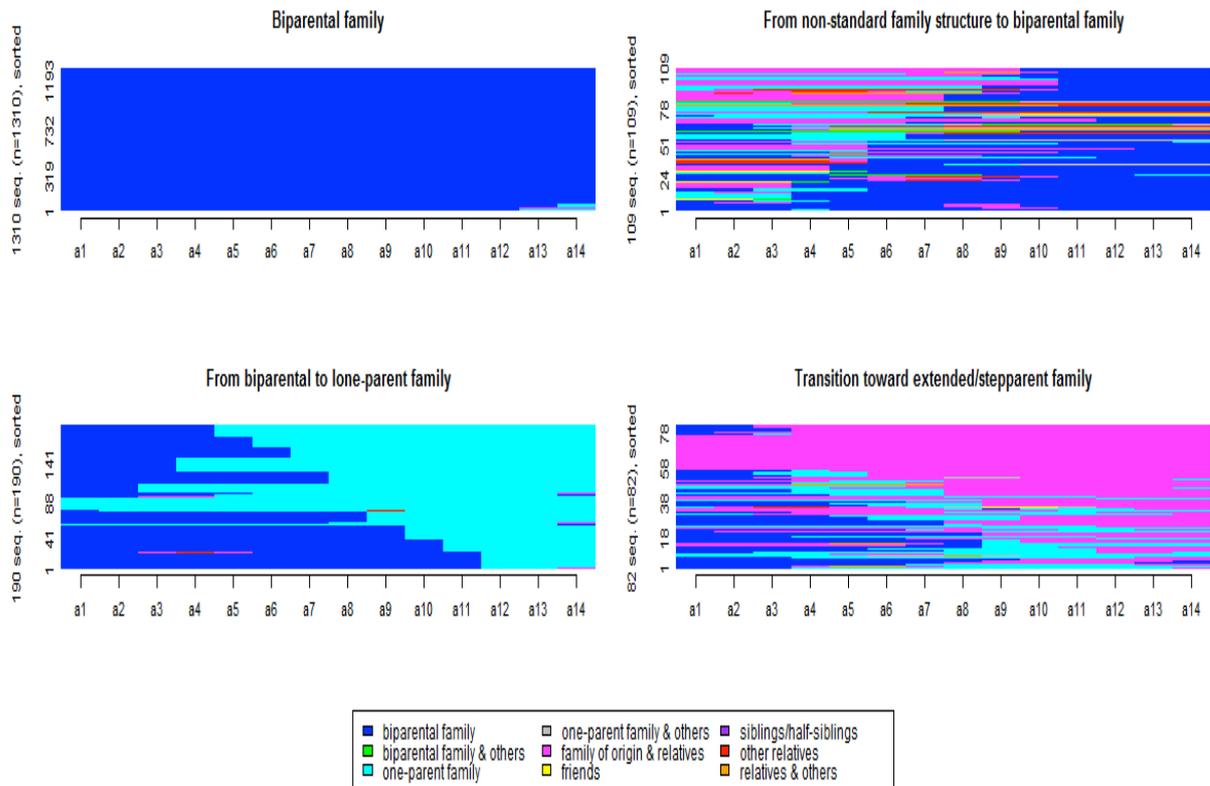


Figure 1: Clusters of trajectories of family structure

*Control variables:* Some control variables were introduced in the model as their influence on home-leaving had been demonstrated in previous researches. First, as previously mentioned, the propensity of nest-leaving diverges according to sex. Thus, a *sex* variable was added to the analyses and men were defined as the category of reference. Second, it has been shown that *the labour market integration* may act as an incentive to leave home. For this reason, I added to the model a dummy variable coded 0 when the respondents were out of the labour market and 1 after their first integration into the labour market. The apprenticeship was not considered as an entry into the labour market. Thirdly, as it has been previously postulated, people living in or close to a big urban centre benefit from greater educational and work opportunities and are, thus, less likely to leave home than people living in rural municipalities. Therefore I created a variable indicating the *place of residence* of the respondents at age 14. This factor is composed of 6 modalities: big centres (category of reference), middle and big centres, periurban and metropolitan centres, periurban and pendular municipalities, tourist municipalities, and outlying municipalities. This classification results from the typology of municipalities in 22 categories developed by Martin, Dessemontet and Joye (2005). The recoding of this typology is presented in Table 1 in the appendix. The classification developed by the aforementioned researchers is based on a model

centre-periphery, meaning that the municipalities are classified in different categories according to their belonging to a metropolitan agglomeration, to a non-metropolitan agglomeration or to a rural municipality. The other criteria used to construct this typology are variables related to employment, structure of buildings, wealth, tourism, structure of the population and centrality. Concerning the sample, there were also a small number of people who were living abroad when they were 14 years old (n=5). Because this number was very small, I decided not to take into account those cases in the analyses. Further, it has been shown that the *ethnic origin* of young adults is likely to have an impact on the choices they make regarding their transition to adulthood. Thereby, a categorical variable regarding their ethnicity was created. In order to distinguish the Swiss natives from the second-generation immigrants, I referred to the place of birth of their parents. In some research conducted by the National Institute of Demographic Studies (INED) and the Centre for Studies and Research on Qualifications (CEREQ), the respondents were considered as second-generation immigrants if at least one of their parents was not born in the host country (Santelli, 2004). I also decided to use this definition and the origin country of the foreign parents was used as the benchmark to define the ethnic origin of the respondents. Concerning mixed unions, namely marriages between people with different national origins (Swiss not included), I always emphasized the native country of the mother. Indeed, it has been previously shown that, among the population from a foreign background, the departure from the family home is more an issue of socialisation than a lack of opportunities. As the role of socialisation is principally endorsed by the mother, I only considered her native country in case of mixed unions. In some circumstances, the information about the country of birth of the parents was missing. In this case, the ethnic origin was deduced from the respondent's first nationality. As it was a self-assessed nationality, if "Swiss" was mentioned as the first nationality, I verified that the respondent did not mention a second foreign nationality. If he/she had, the respondent was considered as a second-generation immigrant and his/her foreign nationality was used to assess his/her ethnic origin. Five categories were created: Switzerland (category of reference), Eastern Europe, South-western Europe, North-western Europe and Northern America, and other continents. Moreover, as it has been previously explained, one of the independent variables refers to the clusters of trajectories of family structure in which individuals grew up. However, this factor did not take into account the *marital disruptions* that occurred after the age of 14. For this reason, I decided to construct a time-varying variable that indicated at each age - from 14 to the departure from the parental home - whether the parents of the respondents had experienced a separation or a divorce. More precisely, the variable was coded 0 when the

divorce had not occurred and 1 when it had. Nonetheless, if the marital disruption had already occurred by the age of 14, the variable was assigned the value of 1 from the beginning of the risk period. Lastly, *age* was included in the model, since people are expected to be more likely to leave home as they grow older. A variable indicating the elapsed number of years since the beginning of the risk period was created.

#### **4. Results**

The following table provides a synthesis of the results of the discrete-time binary logistic regression which aims to measure the impact of the various selected independent factors on the probability of leaving the parental home (Cf. Table 1). Four models have been built. The aim was to progressively add factors from the theoretically most central variable to the control variables in order to better understand their separate effects. Thus, in the first model, I only selected the family structure variable. In the second place, I added the variables regarding labour market integration, residency and divorce of the parents. The third model was completed with all the demographic factors, such as age, sex and ethnic origin. Lastly, I mentioned in the description of the sample that the second-generation immigrants have been over-represented in this survey and that, for this reason, the selection process was based on various criteria such as place of birth, nationality, residence permit, place of residence and size of the social network. As a result, in order to avoid biases in the analyses, the inclusion of those factors should have been a necessary step. Nonetheless, almost all those criteria designated the situation of the respondents at the time of the survey, namely in 2013. However, most of the people who left the parental home did it before 2013 and, methodologically speaking, one cannot explain the probability of an event to occur by factors that refers to a subsequent time period. As a consequence, I only kept the variables which referred to the time period preceding the beginning of the risk period. Indeed, the nationality, the residence permit, the place of residence and the network size are all time-varying variables that can change over time. Moreover, I make the assumption according to which the nationality is already partially taken into account in the analyses through the ethnic origin variable.

As regards the simplest model, the respondents who spend half of their childhood in a biparental household and the other half in a lone-parent family are more likely to leave home than those who grow up with both parents. Moreover, people who either go from a non-standard family structure to a biparental household or who experience a transition toward an

extended/stepfamily have the same probability of leaving home than those who were raised in a biparental family.

Table 1: Logit models predicting probability of first home-leaving

Departure from the parental home													
Covariates		Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
		Coef.	Std. Err.	Sig.									
<b>Intercept</b>		-4.147	0.092	***	-5.267	0.215	***	-6.865	0.335	***	-6.577	0.427	***
<b>Family structure</b>	Biparental family (ref.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	From biparental to lone-parent family	0.545	0.209	**	0.532	0.233	*	0.662	0.244	**	0.647	0.245	**
	From non-standard family structure to biparental family	0.199	0.295		0.196	0.309		0.104	0.329		0.007	0.345	
	Transition toward extended/stepparent family	0.262	0.349		0.145	0.378		0.291	0.400		0.271	0.402	
<b>Labour market integration</b>					1.281	0.196	***	0.291	0.208		0.293	0.209	
<b>Place of residence</b>	Big centres (ref.)				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Periurban & metropolitan centres				0.421	0.290		0.235	0.308		0.256	0.308	
	Touristic municipalities				0.434	0.475		0.491	0.496		0.470	0.495	
	Middle & small centres				0.199	0.196		0.229	0.205		0.216	0.206	
	Periurban & pendular communities				0.194	0.335		0.015	0.349		-0.001	0.349	
	Outlying municipalities				0.481	0.239	*	0.354	0.260		0.353	0.260	
<b>Divorce</b>					0.297	0.238		0.214	0.249		0.239	0.251	
<b>Sex</b>	Men (ref.)							-	-	-	-	-	-
	Women							0.370	0.168	*	0.380	0.169	*
<b>Ethnic origin</b>	Switzerland (ref.)							-	-	-	-	-	-
	Eastern Europe							-0.899	0.218	***	-1.018	0.242	***
	South-western Europe							-0.870	0.263	***	-0.884	0.263	***
	North-western Europe & northern America							0.453	0.301		0.452	0.301	
	Other continents							-0.205	0.284		-0.189	0.283	
<b>Age</b>								0.529	0.035	***	0.525	0.035	***
<b>Place of birth</b>	Overrepresented place of birth (ref.)										-	-	-
	Underrepresented place of birth										-0.269	0.264	

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Second, the impact of the family structure on the propensity of nest-leaving remain unchanged after the introduction of the variables concerning the labour market integration, the place of residence and the divorce. Concerning the labour market integration, it appears that being economically integrated leads to an increase in the likelihood of leaving home in comparison with those who are out of the labour market. Regarding the place of residence, there is some evidence that the people who resided in an outlying municipality at age 14 are more likely to found an independent household than those who lived in a big centre at the same age. Lastly, the occurrence of a divorce or a separation in the respondent's household between his/her fourteenth birthday and his/her departure from the parental does not lead to an increase in his/her probability of leaving home. While the influence of the family structure on the departure from the parental home remains unchanged in the third model, some alterations can be observed regarding the impacts of the variables concerning the labour market integration and the place of residence. On the one hand, being employed no longer has an influence on the probability of leaving home. This effect disappears with the introduction of the age variable, an observation that can be made in table 2 in the appendix. Indeed, this table gives an illustration of all the changes in the coefficients resulting from the step-by-step introduction of each demographic variable. As far as the place of residence is concerned, it no longer has an impact on the probability of leaving home. Furthermore, being a woman significantly and positively influences the home-leaving process. Put differently, women are more likely to found an independent household than men during the period considered (15 to 24 years old). Moreover, it seems that the departure from the parental home is significantly influenced by ethnic origin. On the one hand, consistent with what was expected, young adults from an Eastern or a South-western European background have significantly lower odds of leaving their parental home than their Swiss peers, even though the Southern Europeans are the least likely to leave the parental home. On the other hand, it seems that the North-western Europeans and the Northern Americans have the same probability of leaving home than the Swiss natives. What is more, there is some evidence that people are more likely to found their own household as they grow older. Finally, the introduction of the last control variable did not lead to any change.

In table 1, the impact of a set of selected factors on the probability of leaving the parental home has been demonstrated. Nonetheless, one can also examine the interaction effects which occur when the effect of an independent factor on the dependent variable varies with the value of another explanatory variable. The following table provides a synthesis of the results of the

interaction effects analysis (Cf. Table 2). In order to save space, only the significant interaction effects have been reported. Also, as there were not enough people in each category of the ethnic origin variable and because I did not want the subgroups to negatively impact the results, I decided to gather all the people of foreign origin into one group: the second-generation immigrants.

Table 2: Logit models predicting probability of first home-leaving with interaction effects

Covariates		Departure from the parental home		
		Coef.	Std. Err.	Sig.
<b>Intercept</b>		-6.736	0.458	***
<b>Family structure</b>	Biparental family (ref.)	-	-	-
	From biparental to lone-parent family	1.189	0.316	***
	From non-standard family structure to biparental family	-0.545	0.744	
	Transition toward extended/stepparent family	1.598	0.509	**
<b>Labour market integration</b>		0.268	0.209	
<b>Place of residence</b>	Big centres (ref.)	-	-	-
	Periurban & metropolitan centres	-0.347	0.559	
	Touristic municipalities	0.159	0.672	
	Middle & small centres	0.219	0.389	
	Periurban & pendular communities	-0.438	0.592	
	Outlying municipalities	-0.448	0.428	
<b>Divorce</b>		0.355	0.251	
<b>Sex</b>	Male (ref.)	-	-	-
	Female	0.641	0.205	**
<b>Ethnic origin</b>	Switzerland (ref.)	-	-	-
	Second-generation immigrants	-0.980	0.330	**
<b>Age</b>		0.519	0.035	***
<b>Place of birth</b>	Overrepresented place of birth (ref.)	-	-	-
	Underrepresented place of birth	0.072	0.236	
<b>Family structure*Sex</b>				
From bi-parental to lone-parent family * Women		-1.049	0.459	*
Transition toward extended/stepparent family * Women		-2.187	0.804	**
<b>Ethnic origin * place of residence</b>				
Second-generation immigrants * Outlying municipalities		1.052	0.528	*

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

One of the most interesting finding is that, while belonging to the third family cluster had no significant influence on the probability of nest-leaving in the previous table, it significantly

increases the odds of leaving home in this model. In other words, the respondents who experienced a transition toward an extended or a stepparent family structure during their childhood are more likely to move out from their parental home than those who grew up with their two parents. If we take a look at the interaction effects in the second part of the table, we can first see that even if the people who belong to the second and fourth clusters are more likely to leave home than those who grew up in a biparental family, this probability is inversed if we take into consideration the interaction with the sex of the respondents. Indeed, it appears that among these family structures, women have lower chances of leaving home than men. Secondly, whereas the population from a foreign background are less likely to leave home than their Swiss counterparts, this likelihood becomes positive when we consider the place in which they used to live when they were 14 years old. As an illustration, the second-generation immigrants who were living in an outlying municipality at that age have greater odds of leaving home than the Swiss natives.

## **5. Discussion**

The main objective of this writing was to determine how the changing family structures affect the life events occurring in the lives of individuals during their transition to adulthood, such as the departure from the parental home. Also, the inclusion of various socio-economic characteristics in the model was aimed at enabling me to see how those factors overlap with the family structure and influence the propensity to leave home.

One of the most significant results of the analysis was to highlight the positive impact of the lone-parent family structure on the propensity to leave the parental home, which is a confirmation of my previous assumptions. What is more, it was interesting to see that this effect stays statistically significant even after the inclusion of all the control variables. Concerning the extended or the stepparent family structure, its influence only became significant when the interaction with the sex of the respondent had been taken into account. This means that those family structures have a diverging impact on the likelihood of leaving home according to sex. Indeed, as it has been shown, women seem to encounter less difficulties in these types of family environment as they are less likely to leave home than men. This ascertainment contradicts my hypotheses according to which girls who have grown up either in a step- or an extended family were expected to leave home at an earlier age than boys. Likewise, it appears that young girls who experience a transition from a biparental family to a lone-parent family adjust better to this type of family structure than young boys as

they are less likely to leave home than men. In that case, this is a corroboration of my assumption. According to Rossi (1990), women consider having good family relationships more often than men, because they perceive themselves as future kin keepers. Moreover, according to Demo and Acock (1988: 622), “*most of the evidence suggests that adjustment problems are more severe and last for longer periods of time among boys*”. Consequently, their better adjustment capacity and their higher tendency to maintain good family relationships could explain why women adjust better to non-standard family structures than men. As regards the second family cluster, which is characterized by a transition from a non-standard to a biparental family structure, its members have the same probability of founding an independent household than those who belong to the category of reference. This could stem from the fact that, contrarily to the second and fourth clusters, not all these non-standard family structures are directly related to divorce. Indeed, as previously mentioned, I made the assumption that this cluster could concern people who spent their first years with one of their parents because they were temporarily separated or because one of them was not living in the same country. On the other hand, I also assumed that it could refer to individuals who spent the beginning of their childhood in an extended family, living with close relatives such as grandparents. As a consequence, we could deduce that those types of family structures do not induce young adults to hasten their departure from the parental home. This could be due to the fact that this situation is temporary and is, most of the time, no longer topical when young adults are old enough to leave home.

Secondly, in concordance with what was expected, most of the control variables have an influence on the event studied. First of all, women have higher odds of moving out from their parental home than men. What is more, as it was assumed, finding employment leads to an increasing probability of settling in independently. However, this effect disappears with the introduction of the socioeconomic variables, more precisely with the inclusion of the age variable. This probably means that a higher probability of moving out from the parental home is not explained by the obtaining of employment, but by age, and that the relationship between the probability of leaving the parental home and the labour market integration was only statistically significant because the likelihood of finding a job increases with age. In other words, people do not move out because they have become economically independent, but because they have reached a certain age at which founding one’s own household has become the norm. Furthermore, I made the assumption that living in a big centre will induce the respondents to stay longer at home. According to my results, people who lived in an outlying municipality have a higher propensity to found their own household than those who resided in

a big centre at the same age. However, all relationships with the place of residence and the departure from the parental home become insignificant when the demographic variables are introduced. It may mean that they have a stronger impact on home-leaving than the geographical context in which people grew up. I found significant interaction effects between the place of residence and the ethnic origin. Indeed, it seems that in the outlying municipalities people from a foreign background are often more likely to leave their parents than Swiss natives. Furthermore, the occurrence of a parental divorce or a separation between the age of 15 and the departure from the parental home does not have a significant effect on home-leaving. This could stem from the fact that the parental disruptions that occur when children are still young are more likely to have a determinant impact on their decisions to leave home than those that happen at the end of their childhood. Indeed, it has been demonstrated that even though families in which a parental disruption occurs at a later age cannot be considered as identical to those who remain intact, it is yet reasonable to suppose that the former provide many of the qualities that have been linked with stable households (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). This comes from the fact that parents - who decide to stay together despite conflicts – do so because they are convinced that it is in their children's best interests. Thus, this higher economic and emotional parental investment of couples who divorce later in life is likely to mitigate most of the negative consequences of divorce for a long period of time. Moreover, the analyses have shown that the respondents from a South-western or an Eastern European background are less likely to settle in an independent household than their Swiss counterparts. On the other hand, the second-generation immigrants from North-western Europe or Northern America have the same likelihood of leaving home than the Swiss natives. Finally and unsurprisingly, the probability of leaving home increases with age, even exceeding the effect of labor market integration.

To conclude, the results presented here indicate that parental divorce tends to push young adults out of the parental home. Indeed, as mentioned beforehand, growing up in such an environment is likely to impede access to a number of assets that enable individuals to benefit from a prolonged stay in the parental home. This conclusion is further reinforced by more detailed analyses showing that the effect of the family structure on home-leaving varies according to sex. These results reveal the better adjustment capacity of women to non-standard family structures. Moreover, the analyses show that the only control variables that have an impact on the probability of leaving home are demographic factors such as sex, ethnic origin and age. In other words, it seems that the characteristics that define who we are have a

determining influence on the decisions we make along our life course. This could be due to that fact that those individual characteristics are often closely linked to norms that determine the optimal timing of life events or the optimal conditions in which those events should occur. Indeed, concerning age, there is a distinct definition in each country of when it is too early or too late to leave home. Gender roles are also based on norms or standards that are created by society. Those norms often lead men and women to adopt specific behaviours that might delay or hasten the departure from the parental home. With regard to ethnic origin, it has been demonstrated that, among second-generation immigrants, a number of criteria such as being economically independent or being married often have to be fulfilled to leave the parental home, requirements that might lead to a protracted stay in the parental home. On the contrary, labour market integration, late divorce and residency are not closely associated to norms that define optimal timing of life events. Indeed, as previously mentioned, it has been demonstrated that even though families in which a parental disruption occurs at a later age cannot be considered as identical to those who remain intact, it is yet reasonable to suppose that the former provide many of the qualities that have been linked with stable households. This could explain why those factors do not have a significant influence on home-leaving.

#### *Further contributions*

One relative weakness of this study is that it did not enable me to integrate variables regarding the socioeconomic status of the respondent's family, because this information will only be asked in the second wave of the Cohort study. However, the higher probability of children from lone-parent families of leaving home could stem from the fact that those families often encounter financial difficulties and that this situation is positively related to the tendency of children to leave home (Bianchi, 1987). As a consequence, a further contribution of this study will be to integrate those variables into my analysis as soon as they are available. Another weakness of my study is that the link between the family structure and the departure from the parental home may be explained by another factor, which is the quality of relations within the household. Indeed, the higher probability of children from stepfamilies leaving home could come from the fact that conflicts and disagreements are more frequent in this family environment (Gähler & Bernhardt, 2000). Unfortunately, there is no variable in the survey that might enable me to verify this assumption. As a result, longitudinal data supplemented with more detailed qualitative accounts of the quality of family relations might provide useful information that could fill the gap.

**Notes:**

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<sup>i</sup> PRN LIVES. (2013). *Enquête de cohorte* [Data file]. Lausanne : MIS Trend.

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**Appendices***Table 1: Recoding of the variable “place of residence” according to the typology of municipalities of Martin, Dessemontet and Joye (2005)*

<b>Typology of municipalities</b>		<b>Recoding</b>
1	Big centres	
9	Employment municipalities from metropolitan regions	Big centres
10	Suburban municipalities from metropolitan regions	
11	Periurban municipalities from metropolitan regions	Peri-urban & metropolitan centres
5	High-income municipalities	
6	Touristic municipalities	
7	Semi-touristic municipalities	Touristic municipalities
8	Municipalities with collective institutions	
2	Middle centres	
3	Small centres	Middle & little centres
12	Employment municipalities from non-metropolitan regions	
13	Suburban municipalities from non-metropolitan regions	
14	Periurban municipalities from non-metropolitan regions	Peri-urban & pendular municipalities
15	Pendular municipalities of allochtons	
16	Pendular municipalities of autochtons	
4	Centres of peripheral regions	
17	Industrial and tertiary municipalities	
18	Industrial municipalities	
19	Agro-industrial municipalities	Outlying municipalities
20	Agro-tertiary municipalities	
21	Agricultural municipalities	
22	Municipalities in strong demographic decline	

Table 2: Logit model predicting probability of first home-leaving with integration into the labour market as independent variable

		Departure from the parental home											
		Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
		Coef.	Std.Err.	Sig.	Coef.	Std.Err.	Sig.	Coef.	Std.Err.	Sig.	Coef.	Std.Err.	Sig.
Intercept		-4.891	0.169	***	-5.127	0.196	***	-4.794	0.228	***	-6.346	0.281	***
Integration into the labour market		1.259	0.191	***	1.279	0.191	***	1.309	0.191	***	0.279	0.202	
Sex	Male (ref.)				-	-		-	-		-	-	
	Female				0.409	0.157	**	0.348	0.158	*	0.336	0.162	*
Ethnic origin	Switzerland (ref.)							-	-		-	-	
	Eastern-Europe							-0.578	0.199	**	-0.946	0.207	***
	South-western Europe							-0.845	0.247		-0.977	0.253	***
	North-western Europe & Northern America							0.346	0.272		0.486	0.282	
	Other continents							-0.016	0.245		-0.191	0.255	
Age											0.508	0.034	***