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Cohabitation, marriage and children's economic well-being: Spain in comparative perspective

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Doctoral Dissertation

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The increase in non-marital cohabitation[1] is one of the most striking demographic changes have occurred in Western countries in the past several decades. Although marriage remains important and desirable for most people, recent research suggests that cohabitation has dramatically altered family formation patterns and childbearing processes (Perelli-Harris et al., 2010; Musick & Michelmore, 2015). The traditional sequence of family formation, characterized by early and direct marriage and then having children, has become far less dominant. The pathways to form families are more unpredictable and less uniform. In most European countries, cohabitation has increasingly shifted from a rare and deviant pattern of family to a fairly normal and socially accepted partnership.

In parallel with the prevalence of cohabitation, there has been a considerable rise in unmarried childbearing. And these two developments are intimately correlated. More and more children are expected to be born to or spend time living with cohabiting parents. For example, in Sweden where cohabitation has become a normative living arrangement for couples and children, more than half of all births were non-marital (e.g. 54.7% in 2015) with around 84% of them were born to cohabiting mothers (Duvander, 1999; Holland, 2013). Spain used to be labeled as "marginal" in terms of the diffusion of non-marital cohabitation compared with other industrialized countries (Heuveline & Timberlake, 2004). Nevertheless, family formation outside of marriage has intensified during the recent two decades (Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2013). Cohabitation has turned into a growingly frequent partnership choice among couples and context for having children. According to the Vital Statistics 2015 (INE), the out-of-wedlock births account for 44.43% of all births in Spain, with 55.1%[2] of unmarried births belonging to cohabiting mothers.

The presence of children within cohabiting unions is causing a great deal of concern to scholars and policymakers about the well-being of children. Cohabiting couples with children are of great policy relevance than those without children because children's living arrangements and

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[1] The terms "cohabitation", "non-marital/unmarried cohabitation", "cohabiting unions", "consensual unions" are used synonymously in the thesis. This type of partnership refers to couples living together in an intimate sexual relationship without being married.
[2] Missing data was removed to calculate this percentage.

resources are directly affected by their parents' living conditions. There is a further concern that cohabiting parents tend to be relatively disadvantaged compared to married parents. A growing body of research has intensively focused on the implications of cohabitation for children. In short, studies demonstrate that cohabitation has negative impacts on child well-being across multiple outcomes. Compared with those in married households, being born to or being raised in cohabiting families are associated with a higher incidence of worse economic circumstances, poorer academic performance, more behavioral and mental problems, and poorer health situation among children (Acs & Nelson, 2002; Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2002; Willetts & Maroules, 2004; Raley, Frisco, & Wildsmith, 2005; Hofferth, 2006; Bulanda & Manning, 2008; Schmeer, 2011). Furthermore, adverse effects of parents' cohabitation on children's outcomes are not temporary but long-term and are even transmitted across generations. More specifically, evidence shows that adolescents living in cohabiting-parent families have higher odds of early sexual initiation and teen pregnancy (Bulanda & Manning, 2008). In turn, they are more likely to enter into cohabitation during early adulthood and having children outside of wedlock. Thereby, children in cohabiting unions have higher risks of experiencing parental separation, economic hardship, poorer parenting, and a set of adverse outcomes experienced by the previous generation. This intergenerational continuity suggests a cyclical pattern in which family instability and its detrimental impacts on parents and children can pass down from one generation to another (Kroeger & Smock, 2014).

Children certainly cannot choose whether, to whom, or under what circumstances they are born, but they benefit or suffer from these conditions. The majority of resources that children have access to are from their parents. Some argue that differences in the well-being between children living in cohabiting- and married-parent families are mainly attributable to the divergence between parents' characteristics (Acs & Nelson, 2004). Hence, to understand why children living in cohabiting families are not as beneficial as children living with married parents, it is necessary to compare the cohabiting parents with married ones.

The implications of cohabitation for child well-being are subject to the national context. Most studies conducted in the US and in some European countries find that children living with cohabiting parents fare worse than those with married parents (Manning & Lichter, 1996; Nelson, Clark, & Acs, 2001; Acs & Nelson, 2002; Willetts & Maroules, 2004; Raley, Frisco, & Wildsmith, 2005; Brown, Lee, & Bulanda, 2006; Manning & Brown, 2006; Apel & Kaukinen, 2008; Bulanda & Manning, 2008; Schmeer, 2011). However, in Sweden, where national policies and social norms

treat cohabitation more akin to marriage, living in cohabiting-parent families does not have a significantly negative effect on child well-being (Ono & Yeilding, 2009; Lindquist & Lindquist, 2012). In this sense, the link between parental cohabitation and child well-being depends on a variety of contextual characteristics. For instance, to encourage some types of family structure over others, states may grant married couples exclusive rights such as the joint taxation, which affects family incomes. Moreover, family policies play an important role in child well-being. States can provide more equal opportunities for all children no matter their living arrangements through universal and generous cash benefits and in-kind assistance to families with children. Another possible explanation is that the dissimilarities between cohabiting and married parents vary across countries. The context in which an individual living establishes a set of constraints and possibilities that shape his or her life course. In this regard, the broad cross-national variations in the incidence of cohabitation and unmarried births may contribute to the disparities in characteristics between cohabiting and married parents across countries.

Families with children face increasing risks nowadays. The new economic system, globalization and advances in technology, on the one side, do enhance people's living standards and quality. On the other side, the industrial restructuration has contributed to the growth of economic inequality and the rise in non-traditional family forms. The new labor market favors better-educated and higher-skilled workers, but for other young workers, the institutional supports have considerably diminished in job security and wage protection (Chevan & Stokes, 2000; Vleminckx & Smeeding, 2001; McDonald, 2006). Changes in family formation might be a reaction to the prevailing globalization and industrial reconstruction, and thereby "sets the conditions for perpetuating broader inequality patterns" (Martin, 2006, p422). If cohabitation is taken as a response to adverse economic climate or a strategy applied to cope with unstable employment and economic hardship, it will be of great importance to tell whether it is cohabitation *per se* accounts for poor child outcomes or whether this issue is a consequence of the selection. Therefore, to improve the outcomes of children in different family patterns, it is necessary to know the mechanisms underlying the connection between parents' cohabitation and child well-being.

Economic well-being[3] is central in determining children's present and future life chances, despite economic resources are far from being the only source of child well-being. Rich countries

[3] Although the term of "economic well-being" is widely used, there is no commonly agreed and unique definition. The Council on Social Work Education (2016) provides a relatively comprehensive one, by which economic well-

are not immune to child poverty. In fact, child poverty is a serious social problem growing both in scope and in complexity in Western countries. In Europe, the increase in child poverty during the 1990s was considered as a marginal phenomenon and attracted little attention of policymakers (Hornberg & Pauli, 2007). Since the mid-1990s, child poverty has steadily been rising in many countries and was no longer limited to a small group in a society. In recent years, policymakers and scholars in developed countries have become increasingly concerned with tackling child poverty and enhancing child well-being (Esping-Andersen, 2002; Bradshaw et al. 2005; Ben-Arieh & Goerge, 2006; Bradshaw, Richardson, & Ritakallio, 2007; Flaquer, 2014). A body of literature documents that material hardship in childhood have troublesome ripple-effects throughout the life time, impacting their mental and physical health, cognitive ability, academic performance, career prospects and earnings (e.g. Vleminckx & Smeeding, 2001; Moore et al., 2002; Dashiff et al., 2009; Najman et al., 2010b). Worst of all, children living in poverty are more likely to become poor parents themselves. The transmission of disadvantages in economic well-being from one generation to the next will result in a higher poverty risk for their offspring. A lot of sociologists, demographers, and economists have examined the correlation between family structure and child poverty in Europe, while the focus was mainly on the distinction between married- and single-parent families. To date, an increasing number of studies in Europe have examined the economic well-being of children living with cohabiting parents compared with children in married-parent households and with those living with a single parent. Likewise, the results are mixed and vary across countries (e.g. Heuveline & Weinshenker, 2008; Bradshaw & Holmes, 2010; Lindquist & Lindquist, 2012).

In sum, with the proliferation of various family patterns in European countries over the last few decades, the relationship of parental union status with children's economic well-being has attracted a growing attention. It is a widely held view that children born to or raised in cohabiting-parent families are more disadvantaged than children from married-parent families with respect to the resources they have access to and their outcomes. Most of the studies suggesting children in

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being is defined as "having present and future financial security. Present financial security includes the ability of individuals, families, and communities to consistently meet their basic needs, and have control over their day-to-day finances. It also includes the ability to make economic choices and feel a sense of security, satisfaction, and personal fulfillment with one's personal finances and employment pursuits. Future financial security includes the ability to absorb financial shocks, meet financial goals, build financial assets, and maintain adequate income throughout the life-span". The measurement of economic well-being among children focuses mainly on children's economic deprivation and poverty (Lichter, 1997).

cohabiting families fare worse than children in married families were conducted in the US, whereas findings from European countries are more inconsistent. Thus, it is still unclear whether and how parental cohabitation affects the economic well-being of their children. As a moving target, meanings attached to cohabitation and reasons of forming such a relationship may differ over time. Cohabiting unions have become growingly stable with the rise in cohabitation and childbearing within cohabitation (Perelli-Harris et al., 2012; Musick & Michelmore, 2015). Hence, the correlations between parents' union status and child well-being may also change over time, and thereby our knowledge needs to be updated by using the more recent data.

Why is it interesting to study Spain?

Spain was one of the first countries to reach the lowest-low fertility rate, and the delay of marriage and childbearing have been more pronounced than in North and West European countries, despite these shifts in families happened almost a decade later than in the Nordic countries. However, the growth of cohabitation remained slow until very recent years (Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín & 2013). This phenomenon was called as a "paradox" by Dalla Zuanna and Micheli (2004). In the light of the Second Demographic Transition theory, low fertility has traditionally been seen as one of the consequences of modernity in family behavior, but it was accompanied by the low development in non-traditional family patterns (i.e. cohabitation) in Spain, which is quite distinct from the pioneer countries in family changes. One main interpretation is the Mediterranean pattern of family formation — the prolonged co-residence with parents among young adults, the high synchronization of the departure from parental home, family formation, and fertility (Baizán, Aassve, & Billari, 2003; Rutigliano & Esping-Andersen, 2017). Most of the young Spaniards do not achieve residential autonomy before their 30s (Tobío, 2001). The co-residence with parents has become a cultural custom mostly due to difficult access to housing and poor labor market conditions together with quite limited state assistance (Moreno, 2012). Therefore, considering the difficulties for young generations to attain residential and economic independence, Spanish cohabitors may have different traits compared to those in other countries. Moreover, the meanings attached to cohabitation in Spain may also distinct.

Domínguez-Folgueras and Castro-Martín (2013, p422) addressed that "once the process (of family change) was set in motion (in Spain), the pace of change was generally faster, and its

intensity greater than in other European societies". Based on the 1995 Fertility and Family Survey, Heuveline and Timberlake (2004) categorized 17 western countries into different types according to the role of cohabitation in the family formation process. In this classification, Spain was described as "marginal", indicating that cultural and institutional penalizations confined cohabitation to a small minority of couples. Not only should the incidence and duration of cohabitation be low, but children's exposure in cohabiting families should be even lower. In their later article using the 2006 Fertility, Family and Values Survey, Domínguez-Folgueras and Castro-Martín (2013) argued that cohabitation has substantially increased since the mid-1990s, particularly among young cohorts, and thus the role of cohabitation in the family formation process can no longer be labeled as "marginal" in the Spanish society. Moreover, the proportion of extramarital births rose from 11.1% in 1995 to 44.4% in 2015, which was largely driven by the increasing share of births to cohabiting parents. In addition, there have been profound changes in values and attitudes concerning marriage, cohabitation, and childbearing that are currently very similar to people from the Nordic countries, and clearly deviate from those in other Mediterranean nations. Consequently, even if Spain was a latecomer in the process of family change, the pace of change has been quite intensive (Rutigliano & Esping-Andersen, 2017). It is noteworthy that the profiles of cohabitors in Spain have rapidly changed as well. By conducting studies based on two different datasets respectively (the Spanish Fertility Survey 1999 and the Fertility, Family and Values Survey 2006), Domínguez-Folgueras and Castro-Martín (2008; 2013) obtained different results concerning the impact of education on entry into cohabitation relative to marriage among women. They suggest that better educated women were forerunners in the practice of cohabitation, yet it has now become more common across all educational groups.

What is more unique in the Spanish case is the socioeconomic, cultural, political transformations after the Franco dictatorship. The intense secularization and liberalization in this society drive the rapid growth of non-traditional family formation patterns (Meil Landwerlin, 2003). During the Franco regime, the Catholic Church was recognized as the official religion of the country and thus deeply and widely controlled both public and private spheres in Spanish society. At that time, women suffered from the oppression and discrimination of the patriarchal context in terms of education, employment, family life and even reproduction choices. The greater the oppression, the stronger the rebound. After the death of Franco, the process of secularization was rapid and drastic, which brought changes in almost all domains of personal and family life.

Individuals gained much greater freedom in choosing their lifestyles and family behavior with fewer or no sanctions and biases. In addition, the transition from autarky to economic liberalism, related to internationalization, in the late 1950s and the early 1960s generated the process of modernization in society, politics, culture. The expansion of higher education among women, the increase in female labor force participation, and distinct ideas and values brought by tourists from the Western and Northern Europe, substantially changed the role of women and family formation patterns within a short span of time. The remarkably rapid changes occurred during the transition to democracy may in part explain the fast pace and great intensity of changes in family behavior nowadays.

In Spain, families with dependent children are particularly vulnerable. According to a recent UNICEF report *The State of the World's Children 2016*, Spain has the third highest rate of child poverty in the EU, only after Greece and Romania. The level of child poverty showed to be persistently high during the last two decades. Child poverty rates have been consistently above 23% since 1994, which was much higher than the adult poverty rate (Gradín & Cantó, 2012). In addition, the relative position of children in terms of poverty risks has been worsening compared with the elderly over time (Cantó & Mercader-Prats, 2002), and the poverty gap between these two needy groups is much wider than in other European countries. Family policies in Spain give rather low priority to families with children. Oppositely, the elderly are much better protected by the state. The level and the influence of benefits available to families with dependent children remain limited (Matsaganis et al., 2003).

The increase in the rate of child poverty coincides with the marked prevalence of cohabitation and the growth in non-marital births in Spain. Considering that younger cohorts are more likely to be affected by the demographic transformation and adverse outcomes in the labor market, the spread of cohabitation may have contributed to the rise in child poverty. However, to my knowledge, there is no study concerning the relationship between family forms and economic well-being of children taking cohabitation into consideration in Spain. The majority of prior studies only examined the diversity in the risk of child poverty between two-parent families and lone-parent families and illustrated that children in the single-parent families are more likely to fall into poverty and remain poor than children in two-parent families after controlling for parents' education levels (e.g. Cantó & Mercader-Prats, 1998; 2002). Omitting cohabiting unions might underestimate the influence of demographic shifts on child well-being. Furthermore, hidden with

the trend of family formation behavior are differences in the probability of living in a cohabiting or married family by socioeconomic characteristics. Although cohabiting-parent families usually have two earners which are economically beneficial to children, they also have a higher likelihood of being concentrated at the bottom of the education and income distribution relative to their married counterparts (e.g. Manning & Brown, 2006; Castro-Martín, 2010; Perelli-Harris et al., 2010). Few studies in Spain document the discrepancy in characteristics between cohabitors and married people (Meil Landwerlin, 2003; Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2008; 2013), not to say the disparities between cohabiting and married parents (see exception, Castro-Martín, 2010).

The Great Recession has been profoundly affecting families and children, its impacts are rippling through the multiple contexts in which children are situated. Spain was one of the countries that were most severely hit by the crisis, in which children and youth are the most vulnerable groups. After the financial crisis and years of economic austerity, the share of children at risk of poverty in Spain increased by nine percentage points between 2008 and 2014. More than one third of children live at risk of poverty[4], which is much above the EU average (21.1%). Martin (2006) assessed the contribution of changes in family patterns, with the inclusion of cohabitation, to the rise of income inequality among families with children during economic recession and economic recovery between 1976 and 2000 in the U.S. The results show that amidst periods of economic recession, shifts in parental union status account for the rise in inequality between families with children. When cohabiting-parent families are included, the role of family structure changes in poverty trends reduces slightly (Martin, 2006). However, cohabiting parents are more likely to have lower economic resources than their married counterparts, and thus, children living in cohabiting- parent families might have benefited from parental cohabitation relative to children in single-parent households, but this advantage is very limited. Moreover, during the economic crisis, couples with disadvantaged backgrounds may be prone to choose cohabitation rather than marriage, the initial discrepancies in economic resources between married and cohabiting parents amplify and further undermine child well-being. However, no relevant study has been done in Spain, hence, it is unclear how children in different living arrangements fare during the economic crisis.

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[4] According to the Eurostat, "at risk of poverty" is defined as living below the poverty threshold, which is 60% of median equivalised disposable income after social transfers.

Why are these countries chosen to compare with Spain?

There are substantial variations in the prevalence of cohabitation and meanings attached to family formation outside of marriage across Europe (Sobotka & Toulemon, 2008). As mentioned above, the cross-national comparative perspective can extend the scope of our knowledge regarding the role of unmarried cohabitation in family formation and the potential effects of parental cohabitation on child well-being in different contexts. Considering that the main emphasis is on Spain rather than cross-national comparisons, five European countries are selected to compare with Spain — Sweden, Germany, France, the Czech Republic, and the UK.

The selection of the countries aims to reflect the variations across Europe in the prevalence of cohabitation, the levels of child economic well-being, family welfare regimes, as well as the legislative framework on unmarried cohabitation. First, the characteristics of cohabitors relative to married people vary by the prevalence of cohabitation across nations. Cross-national comparisons therefore can reflect the differences in individual characteristics at the national level. More importantly, it may reveal whether the selection effect exists and the strength of this selection. The typology proposed by Heuveline and Timberlake (2004) distinguished six ideal types of cohabitation with respect to family formation process, particularly taking into account children's exposure to cohabitation. The chosen European countries in their research were classified into five conceptually distinct types: (1) marginal, only a small minority of couples enter into cohabitation with a rather low level of children's exposure to parental cohabitation (e.g. Spain); (2) prelude to marriage, unmarried cohabitation is a "testing" phase prior to marriage and the first birth (e.g. the Czech Republic); (3) stage in the marriage process, the sequence and timing of childbearing and marriage are not fixed, with longer average duration of cohabiting unions and considerably higher children's exposure to cohabitation (e.g. Germany); (4) alternative to marriage, cohabitation becomes more widespread with a less likelihood of transition to marriage, and children's exposure to cohabitation becomes more frequent (e.g. France); (5) indistinguishable to marriage, cohabiting unions are "indifferent" to married unions, the incidence of cohabitation among adults and parents is even higher than in the type alternative to marriage (e.g. Sweden). In addition, despite that Heuveline and Timberlake (2004) did not take the UK into account, some scholars argue that the UK is more similar to the type "alternative to single" (6), but normally with nonmarital conception

and non-union births (Perelli-Harris et al., 2009). This typology was questioned by some recent studies (e.g. for Spain, Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2013; for the Czech Republic, Čapková, Kreidl, & Rabušic, 2014; for Germany, Klärner & Knabe, 2017), in most part is because of the rapid growth in unmarried cohabitation in these societies. Despite the limitation, cross-national diversities remain large enough to justify the differentiation (Sobotka & Toulemon, 2008).

By using more recent data, Kasearu and Kutsar (2010) compared the transformation of family formation patterns in 15 European countries with special focus on variations in cohabitation trends. The experience of cohabitation is most widespread in Sweden with a higher incidence of cohabitation and children in cohabiting unions, as well as longer time span. France has a lower prevalence of cohabitation relative to Sweden, while childbearing within cohabitation is the most common. In the UK, the diffusion of cohabitation and the presence of children in cohabitation are lower than Sweden and France, and more cohabitors have been previously married. Cohabitation in Germany is comparatively less prevalent and less likely to involve children compared to the countries mentioned above. Oláh (2015) also shows that although the diffusion of cohabitation is higher in Germany than in Spain and the Czech Republic, the share of cohabitation with children is lower. In the case of Spain and Eastern European countries, cohabitation is becoming increasingly popular, where the rise in cohabitation was even higher than in Northern and Western European countries during 2004-2008, but it is still an emerging behavior (Kasearu & Kutsar, 2011). As a consequence, the diffusion of cohabitation and the presence of children by partnership patterns substantially vary across countries, and it seems that these selected countries cover various stages of cohabitation development in Europe.

More importantly, different stages in the process of the spread of unmarried cohabitation may be related to diverse socio-economic profiles of cohabiting and married couples. In countries with higher diffusion of cohabitation, economic factors may play a comparatively small role in union formation. For example, empirical evidence demonstrates that the distribution of education between married and cohabiting mothers is more similar in Sweden than in France, the UK, and Spain (Musick & Michelmore, 2015). Moreover, cohabiting-parent households have the same poverty rate as married-parent households in Sweden, and contrarily, the poverty gap is larger in Germany, where childbearing and -rearing within cohabitation are not so common, than in France and the UK (Heuveline & Weinshenker, 2008). In countries where cohabitation is still at the earlier stages of the diffusion process, the components of cohabitors are more complex and vary across

countries. Some studies show that cohabitation and childbearing in cohabitation are more prevalent at the lower social strata of society in Central and Eastern Europe (Perelli-Harris, et al., 2010; Hiekel, Liefbroer, & Poortman, 2014), while research in Spain suggests that cohabitation is selective of women who have more economic resources (Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2013), but not for men (Lim, 2017). Therefore, it is important to show the disparities in the practice of cohabitation in countries at different stages of cohabitation and how the economic circumstances of cohabitors relative to married people change in these nations.

Second, another major focus of this study is child poverty as well as children's economic well-being in general, which should be one of the grounds for the selection of countries. Child poverty varies considerably in scale and nature across Europe. Based on the performance in relation to the child poverty risk, the 2008 EU Task-Force Report developed a methodology to cluster European countries into different groups in order to offer "a means of benchmarking policies and outcomes and relating three key determinants of child poverty: labor-market exclusion, in-work poverty and impact of government transfers" (European Commission, 2010, p14). Group A consists of nations with good performance on child poverty outcomes, including the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, and France, etc. In these countries, a set of family policies is in place to support families with children such as relatively generous maternity and parental leave, high benefits available to families with children and wide availability of affordable childcare. Group B is composed of countries that attain relatively good to below average poverty outcomes, including Germany, the Czech Republic, Belgium, and Ireland. In these countries, there is a high proportion of children living in jobless households. Children in jobless or low work-intensity households are found to be more likely to live with lone parents. Hence, the risk of child poverty is strongly related to household structures. Group C consists of nations with below-average performance on child poverty outcomes but better than those in Group D, including only two countries: Lithuania and Latvia. Thus, this group will not be discussed in detail. Group D includes countries with below-average performance in child poverty outcomes, for example, Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal, and Poland. These countries report the highest levels of child poverty and have a high severity of poverty. A large proportion of children experience high levels of in-work poverty among parents, but the share of those who live in jobless households is relatively low. Moreover, the level and efficiency of social transfers are especially low. In Spain, for example, the lack of public care services for very small children has been becoming more acute as the decline of the extended

families and plays a crucial role in diminishing the child poverty risk. More specifically, one of the parents has to take on more childcare responsibilities and devote less to his/her job, thereby, resulting in a fall in household income, while, in many cases, the income of the other parent is not sufficient to keep a high living standard for the entire family, particularly given the low levels of child benefits. In short, the studied countries cover nations with different levels of child poverty in Europe, from as low as in Sweden to as high as in Spain.

Third, public support to families with children in different welfare states. Social provision for families contributes to child well-being and in part explains the marked variations of child poverty across Europe. Family policy scholars usually group states into different regimes from a child-centered perspective through focusing on policies that provide direct financial assistance to families with children, services to childcare and benefits to working parents (Gauthier, 2002; Engster & Stensöta, 2011). On the basis of Esping-Andersen's (1990) three welfare-state regimes — Social Democratic, Conservative, Liberal, Gauthier (2002) developed a typology of family policy regimes, identifying four main regimes: (1) the Socio-Democratic regime, characterized by high generosity and accessibility in state support for families with children, which in general leads to better child outcomes. The examples of this regime-type are the Nordic countries; (2) the Conservative regime, characterized by a medium level of support for families with children that varies according to parental employment status, and a more traditional view of the gender division of labor in households. This regime-type clusters states such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands; (3) the Liberal regime is characterized by relatively low levels of public support for families with high eligibility requirements to family welfare benefits, and heavy reliance on market with regards the provision of childcare services. This regime-type clusters the UK and Switzerland; (4) the Southern European regime is characterized by a high level of fragmentation along occupational lines, a mix between public and private in benefits and services, and no statutory minimum income schemes at the national level. Examples of this regime type are Spain, Greece, Italy, and Portugal. Finally, given that it is difficult to fit Eastern Europe in this typology, these nations are suggested to be clustered as a new type with regards to their family policy strategies, labelled as the "contradictory/mixed model" (Ferrarini, 2006; Ferrarini & Sjöberg, 2010; Boye, 2011), which characterized by the co-existence of high support of the dual-earner family and high gendered labor division in households. This type consists of countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland. These nations share common historical legacies and political

backgrounds that separate themselves from other European countries. During the communist era, these countries had quite generous family policies, for example, long parental leaves with pay, high provision of public childcare services, and generous family allowances. However, the transition from centrally-planned economies to market economies led to different patterns of family welfare retrenchment, moving towards either the Conservative regime or the Social Democratic regime (Ferrarini & Sjöberg, 2010). Thus, there exist great variations among the post-communist countries as well. For example, family policies in the Czech Republic have been heading toward the path of re-familization, with the decline in both the paid parental leaves and public childcare facilities, while Poland has presented a pronounced contradictory policy trait by offering equal supports to traditional family patterns and dual-earner model. Concerned that this is not the main focus of the present study and also for comparability purposes, these countries are classified into one regime in line with prior literature (e.g. Ferrarini, 2006; Ferrarini & Sjöberg, 2010; Boye, 2011). Table 1.1 summarizes the three categorization schemes in accordance with the main focuses in this study (i.e. parental cohabitation and child poverty) to present the reasons for choosing the five countries to compare with Spain.

Table 1.1: An overview of three categorization schemes of Spain, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Sweden, and the UK

	Type of Cohabitation	Performance on Child Poverty Outcomes*	Family Policy Regime
Spain	Marginal	Bad	Southern/Mediterranean regime
Czech Republic	Prelude to marriage	Moderate	Contradictory model
France	Alternative to marriage	Good	Conservative regime
Germany	Stage in the marriage process	Moderate	Conservative regime
Sweden	Indistinguishable to marriage	Good	Socio-democratic regime
UK	Alternative to single	Moderate	Liberal regime

* The 2008 EU Task-Force Report categorized member states into four groups according to the performance on child poverty outcomes. "Good" refers to Group A, "Moderate" refers to Group B, and "Bad" refers to Group C in the typology. More detailed information sees text above.

Research questions

This thesis aims to investigate the relationship between parents' union status and children's economic well-being, with a specific emphasis on parental cohabitation and child poverty in Spain from a cross-national perspective and over time. Spanish families have experienced a dramatic increase in complexity, diversity, and instability during the recent decades. Growth in family complexity is often suggested going together with economic disadvantages. Sara McLanahan (2004) described two distinct trajectories of American families and children, termed as the "diverging destinies", that women with most economic resources are prone to delay childbearing and be more involved in the labor market, whereas women with the fewest resources are inclined to divorce and give birth outside of marriage. Therefore, shifts in family demographics "were exacerbating social class disparities in children's access to economic and social resources" (Amato et al., 2016: v). Due to the lack of relevant studies in Spain, there is neither empirical evidence on the relationship between parental cohabitation and child poverty nor a clear idea on the profiles of cohabiting parents relative to married ones. Hence, the first research questions are: *does the economic well-being of children living in cohabiting-parent households differ from children in households headed by married parents? How does children's economic well-being vary by parents' union statuses?*

The most common indicator of children's economic well-being is child poverty (Hao 1996; Manning & Brown, 2006), including monetary and non-monetary approaches. The measurement of child monetary poverty includes two indicators: child monetary poverty before and after tax and transfers. By distinguishing the total household disposable income from the total household income before tax deduction and transfers, it is possible to investigate whether the interaction of demographic changes with features of the labor market and social welfare contributes to different child poverty risks. In addition, it has been widely recognized that poverty is a multidimensional concept and the monetary approach is not enough to capture the true reality of poverty. The rationale underpinning the monetary approach is that "if individuals have a certain degree of purchasing power they will be able to fulfil their basic needs" (Roelen, 2017, p504). However, having the economic capability to purchase goods and services is not necessarily converted into these goods (Alkire & Santos, 2014). In other words, what children can really obtain from parents' economic resources is influenced by many factors such as their patterns of money management

and resource allocation. Hence, the non-monetary measure, namely material deprivation, has been introduced and commonly used to reflect children's real living conditions. In this thesis, there is another consideration of the necessity of using the material deprivation to measure child poverty, i.e. that the pattern of money management and resource allocation in cohabiting-parent households may be not the same as their married counterparts due to the nature of cohabitation such as lower commitments of cohabiting partners to each other and to their children due to higher instability compared to marriage. Overall, children's economic well-being is measured by three indicators: child monetary poverty risk before tax and transfer; child monetary poverty risk after tax and transfers; material deprivation.

Previous findings on the relationship between parents' union types and child well-being are inconsistent and vary across countries (McLanahan, 2011). Some scholars argued that cohabiting parents are similar to married parents in terms of their relationship quality. The majority of these results were observed in the Scandinavian countries, where cohabiting unions are more widespread and stable, and a large proportion of children are born to or raised up by cohabiting parents. Other analysts found that children in cohabiting-parent families fare worse than those in married-parent families. There are two major explanations regarding the relationship between parental union statuses and children's well-being. First, people are selected into marriage instead of cohabitation based on some certain traits, which also enhance child well-being. Nevertheless, it is unclear whether or not the socioeconomic characteristics of cohabitors differ from their married counterparts in Spain. Second, adverse outcomes of parental cohabitation relative to marriage are a consequence of causal relationships with lower commitments of cohabitors to the other partner and to their children, in particular on the part of fathers (Furstenberg, 2007). Therefore, the second research questions are: *Are cohabiting parents different from their married counterparts in terms of their socioeconomic profiles? Are these disparities in children's economic well-being between married- and cohabiting-parent households explained by parental union status per se or by the selection effect?*

Most of the previous research on cohabitation and marriage focused on women, while men's family behaviors and their role in family changes have often been ignored. Shifts in family behavior are often attributed to the economic independence of women, for instance, the rise in female education and in the labor force participation. Oppenheimer (1988) criticized the "economic-independence" hypothesis by questioning the weak supports from the empirical

evidence and, instead, stressed the role of men's economic conditions. She saw the implications of the rising uncertainty of men's economic prospects in modern society for demographic changes and proposed "bringing men back into the debate". Oppenheimer (2003) suggested that cohabitation can be seen as a trial stage before marriage to observe and wait to reduce uncertainties about men's future economic prospects and the life types, and thereby men's low economic position is less a problem to cohabitation than to marriage. Moreover, in line with the Malthusian ideas regarding the economic costs of marriage (Easterlin, 1978), Oppenheimer insisted that marriage is contingent on the couples' ability to set up a household above some social standards, in which men's economic position is considered determinant (Oppenheimer, Kalmijn, & Lim, 1997). Although men's traditional male-breadwinner role has to some extent lost its force as gender roles become more symmetrical, their economic status is still important.

In addition, men are suggested to be more affected by the growing uncertainty and economic insecurity brought by globalization and technological advancement (Mills & Blossfeld, Klijzing, 2005; Mills & Blossfeld, 2013). Employment structure has been changing since the recent decades in the Western countries. Goos, Manning, and Salomons (2009) argued that the shift of employment does not follow a uniform trend, but it has appeared instead in both the highest-skilled and the lowest-skilled in both the US (Autor, Katz, & Kearney, 2008) and Europe (Spitz-Oener, 2006; Goos & Manning, 2007; Dustmann, Ludsteck, & Schönberg, 2009), which termed as "job polarization". Due to the lack of "middle-skill" jobs, many men are employed in jobs without a reflection of their educational credentials. Furthermore, this wage inequality has translated into a pronounced increase in inequality of household income and consumption, indicating a marked rise in the gap of economic well-being for families (Karoly & Burtless, 1995). As a result, more attention should be paid on the role of men's economic resources, with special emphasis on their employment situation such as irregular attachment to the labor market, temporary employment, unemployment, low-status jobs and so on.

Considering the mixed results on the effect of couples' economic status on union types, McLanahan and Jacobson (2015) raised a crucial methodological issue — whether the study is restricted to mothers or includes all women. They argued that "whereas highly educated women may be more willing and able to experiment with new ideas and lifestyles than less educated women, their motivation may change once they decide to become mothers" (McLanahan & Jacobson, 2015: 18). Goldscheider et al. (2001) and Kalmijn (2013) found that more highly-

educated women had a higher probability of being in a cohabiting union than women with lower education. Domínguez-Folgueras and Castro-Martín (2008) observed a positive effect of women's education on cohabitation in Spain. However, Perelli-Harris and her colleagues (2010) and Kennedy and Thomson (2010) showed that the least educated mothers have the highest likelihood of cohabiting and the most educated mothers are most inclined to be married at the time of giving birth. Likewise, much of the empirical evidence for men from studies that concentrate on family behavior of all partnered men rather than fathers, showing that men with better economic status are more prone to choose marriage rather than cohabitation (e.g. Xie et al., 2003; Kalmijn, 2011). To study the relationship between family changes and children's well-being, it is essential to distinguish parents from partnered men and women without children. Moreover, considering the rapid pace of family changes in Spain, I will compare results from more recent data (i.e. in 2014) and those from the period when cohabitation has started to spread significantly (i.e. in 2006), in order to see the potential changes in this relationship as the prevalence of cohabitation and shifts in the meanings attached to cohabitation and the profiles of cohabitors.

Concerning the link between parental union status and children's economic well-being, the selection explanation suggests that it is the disparities in the characteristics or capabilities between cohabiting and married fathers and mothers, rather than union patterns *per se*, account for the differences in their children's economic well-being. Cohabitation is described as "poor man's marriage" (Landale & Forste, 1991; Kalmijn, 2011), and the disadvantages of women with lower socioeconomic characteristics in the marriage market make them more difficult to find a "marriageable man". Hence, the pre-existing poor economic status of cohabiting parents compared to their married counterparts explains the adverse outcomes of their children relative to those with married parents. The causation explanation argues that the nature of cohabitation lead to adverse economic outcomes for children in cohabiting-parent households relative to those in married-parent households. On the one hand, parents' union status may directly affect their economic circumstances. Many studies have documented that marriage is positively related to men's earnings, which termed as "male marriage premium" (Korenman & Neumark, 1991; Cohen, 2002; Bardasi & Taylor, 2008). One major explanation for the wage premium focuses on intra-household specialization that married men are more productive in market work because they can devote more effort to wage-earning when their wives assume more household work (Killewald, 2012). Another explanation is that employers have biased views of married men, perceiving them as more

responsible and stable workers compared with unmarried men (Cohen, 2002). It is noteworthy that the positive effect of marriage on men's earnings reflects on not only wage growth but also wage levels. Some studies used cross-sectional data to explore the relationship between wage levels and men's marital status (e.g. Loh, 1996; Hersch & Stratton, 2002). Others applied longitudinal data to examine the rise in wages by men's marital status (e.g. Ginther & Zavodny, 2001; Killewald, 2012). More importantly, Bardasi and Taylor (2008) applied both cross-sectional and panel data to examine the "marriage premium" for men and found that despite the longitudinal data methods diminish the marriage premium observed in cross-sectional analysis, the wage premium still persists among married men but not for cohabiting men, and this marriage premium is mainly explained by the diversity in intra-household specialization rather than the selection effect. Furthermore, men with children also have the "fatherhood premium" compared to childless men (Townsend, 2002; Knoester & Eggebeen, 2006; Augustine, Nelson, & Edin, 2009), and this premium is suggested to vary by fathers' union types (Hodges & Budig, 2010; Killewald, 2012). Prior studies found that fatherhood premium is larger for married fathers than for unmarried fathers (Glauber, 2008; Hodges & Budig, 2010), and Killewald (2012) provides further evidence that married residential fathers enjoy more premium than cohabiting fathers, which cannot be completely explained by the selection effect. Although their results are based on the wage growth, it is reasonable to assume that married fathers have higher earnings than unmarried cohabiting fathers based on the empirical evidence provided by Bardasi and Taylor (2008).

On the other hand, parents' resources allocation and money management may differ by their union patterns. It has been suggested that cohabitors tend into invest less to their households and children than married couples because of the lower legal and interpersonal commitments (Poortman & Mills, 2012). The legal commitments between cohabiting partners are lower than between spouses. Although cohabitors have been increasingly granted some rights as married couples, they do not have the same legal status as spouses even in Sweden where cohabitation is widespread. The father role is more ambiguous for cohabiting than married fathers in that cohabiting fathers do not automatically have the legitimacy and rights of married fathers (Hofferth & Anderson, 2003), which may differentiate paternal investment levels according to parents' union status. In addition, cohabitation implies lower interpersonal commitment relative to marriage because it tends to be short-lived and unstable (Stanley, Whitton, & Markman, 2004). The lack of a clear long-term binding decision makes cohabitors more cautious about their investment

(Poortman & Mills, 2012). Empirical findings also show that cohabitors invest less to improve the well-being of children (DeLeire & Kalil, 2005), and they tend to contribute less to household common goods and reduce households material hardship (Bauman, 1999; Lerman, 2002) compared with their married counterparts. Therefore, I explore the debate over the nature of parents' union status and the selection effect in the Spanish context.

In comparison to other developed countries, Spain has relatively higher rates of child poverty. In particular, Spain stands out as having the third highest child poverty in the EU after the Great Recession. During this time period, cohabitation and childbearing within cohabitation have greatly increased, the labor market has suffered a severe setback with astonishing levels of unemployment and irregular form of employment, and social spending has been severely reduced in order to tackle the financial crisis. Previous studies have found that children of cohabiting parents have higher risks of living in poverty compared to children of married parents (Heuveline & Weinshenker, 2008; Bradshaw & Holmes, 2010; Manning, 2015). This result suggests that cross-national diversity in distribution of children by parents' union statuses may account for the gap in child poverty across nations. However, some Scandinavian countries appear as a potential objection to this hypothesis, showing a high prevalence of children in cohabitation and low child poverty rates. Moreover, the co-existence of high child poverty rates and low spread of children in cohabitation in Spain seems to be an objection as well. Studies from the US suggest that the international disparities in child poverty rates may be due to differences in the labor markets and welfare schemes rather than the distribution of children's living arrangements (Heuveline & Weinshenker, 2008). On the one hand, market earnings of households are crucial to children's economic circumstances. Hence, the overall differences between countries in characteristics of the labor market may contribute to international disparities in child poverty rates. Moreover, it has been suggested that the socioeconomic profiles of cohabiting parents are different from married parents. Thus, differential market opportunities of parents by their living arrangements may play an important role in child poverty gap between countries. On the other hand, public assistance to families with children plays a crucial role in the reduction of child poverty through tax and transfers. The differences in children's living arrangements may affect their eligibility for some benefits. Hence, the international child poverty gap may be influenced not only by the differences in social welfare on families and children but also by the disparities in the eligibility for social benefits by living arrangements in different nations. As a result, considering a set of changes in family

behavior, the labor market, social welfare during the recent years in Spain, the third research questions have been raised: *What factors contribute more to the differences in child monetary poverty rates in Spain compared to the other European countries? Whether the higher child poverty rates in Spain are due to the disparities in the labor market or social welfare or to the distribution of children in different living arrangements?*

The main analysis in this thesis is based on the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) survey conducted in Spain, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Sweden, and the UK in 2006 and 2014, with the period of time covered before and during the Great Recession. The EU-SILC survey is selected because it contains rich information on household incomes from different sources and both parents' socioeconomic characteristics, especially their detailed employment situation. Moreover, it is also a reliable cross-national survey with more recent data available.

Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2 reviews literature concerning theories and empirical findings on the determinants of cohabitation and marriage and discusses the variations across countries, by gender, and over time. Chapter 3 provides an overview on family welfare and legal regulations and policies concerning cohabitation compared to marriage in all the six countries. It is useful to understand whether and to what extent do children in cohabiting-parent households receive the same social protection and assistance as those living with married parents. Chapter 4 introduces the concept of child poverty including different definitions and measurements, and the adverse consequences of poverty for children in both short- and long-term. Then, it presents the previous findings on the relationship between child well-being and living arrangements, with specific focuses on parents' cohabitation and children's economic well-being. Family behavior changes and child well-being in a certain society cannot be well understood without getting knowledge about its political, economic, and cultural background. Hence, Chapter 5 gives a detailed overview on the political system during and after the Franco's regime, the structure of the labor market, the welfare state and family policy, the legal recognition of cohabitation, as well as the cultural changes in gender and family attitudes in Spain. In addition, Chapter 6 displays the family transformations in Spain compared with the other five nations, including the evolution of cohabitation and fertility patterns, as well as the

potential effects of cohabitation on divorce and remarriage, that is, union dissolution and repartnering, respectively. On the basis of the reviews on theories and previous studies, Chapter 7 presents the research questions and hypotheses, the introduction of the database, the discussion of the sample selection and of the definition of variables, together with the explanations on the methodology. The descriptive results are shown in Chapter 8 in which child poverty risks by parental union statuses as well as demographic and socioeconomic profiles of fathers and mothers by their living arrangements are displayed for Spain together with the other five European nations in 2006 and 2014. By using the multivariate analyses, Chapter 9 examines the relationship between different dimensions of child poverty and parents' union status and the potential effect of parents' economic resources by their union types. This chapter also explores the contributions of three major factors — labor markets, governmental redistributions resulting from social welfare, and children's distribution across household types — to the child poverty gaps between Spain and the other five nations. Chapter 10 concludes with a summary of the main findings combined with theoretical considerations and previous findings, and with limitations and an outlook to future research.

Chapter 2 Theoretical framework: Micro-level determinants of union status

2.1   Introduction

The prevalence of unmarried cohabitation has become one of the most important family changes in Western countries, along with the rise in divorce, the delay of marriage, and the decline of fertility (McLanahan, 2004; Esping-Andersen & Billari, 2015). On the one hand, cohabitation may resemble a "pure relationship" (Giddens, 1991; 1992), which serves as a context for more egalitarian and more democratic relationships. On the other hand, cohabitation is viewed as a "pattern of disadvantage" (Perelli-Harris & Gerber, 2011), which primarily occurs among individuals with lower economic status that cannot afford to get married.

The theoretical explanations for changes in family behavior have been well-established. In general, there are two main approaches: the ideational approach argues that shifts in attitudes and values, characterized by the increasing acceptance of cohabitation and unmarried childbearing, contribute to the rise in cohabitation (e.g. Lesthaeghe 2010); the economic approach focuses on the changing economic resources of men and women, particularly, the growing economic independence of women and the increasing economic insecurity of men (e.g. Becker 1981; Oppenheimer 1997).

2.2   Ideational changes

2.2.1 The Second Demographic Transition theory

The concept of the Second Demographic Transition was introduced by Ron Lesthaeghe and Dirk Van de Kaa in 1986, referring to a package of interrelated changes in partnership behavior, family formation, and fertility since 1960s in Western countries. There are three main phases of the family behavioral changes (Lesthaeghe, 1995): the first phase, initiated between 1955 and 1970, consists of three major parts — a considerable acceleration of the rise in divorce rate, the decline of fertility at all cohorts, and the postponement of marriage. But marriage was still believed to be an essential requirement for couples to have an intimate sexual relationship, live together and have children (Nazio & Blossfeld, 2003). The second phase occurred roughly between 1970 and 1985, when

premarital cohabitation started to spread from the Scandinavian countries to many others. In some European countries, cohabitation largely compensated for the decline in marriage, and accounted for a larger proportion of nonmarital births among all births. The third phase has happened since the mid-1980s onward, divorce rates reached a very high level, fertility decreased below the replacement level, and post-marital cohabitation and living apart together relationship emerged as new living arrangements. More importantly, the increase in one-parent families, mostly single mother families, resulted in the feminization of poverty and greater disparities in children's well-being (McLanahan, 2004).

Contrary to the first demographic transition when family became a stronger institution, "deinstitutionalization" was considered as the main feature of the second transition. Along with other family changes, unmarried cohabitation experienced different stages of development and played various roles in union formation and fertility during the Second Demographic Transition. Van de Kaa (1997) constructed a summary overview of 15 sequential stages of the Second Demographic Transition on the basis of trends between 1965 to 1995, in which the development of cohabiting unions was mentioned: first, cohabitation emerged as a stage prior to marriage and this postponed the age at first marriage; second, cohabitation received more support and became more common among the widowed and the divorced (as an alternative to remarriage); third, cohabitation is increasingly taken as alternative to marriage, with more children born within cohabitation. Over time, cohabiting unions become more normative with prolonged duration, and fertility behavior of cohabitors and married spouses converges as more children are born within cohabitation. However, not only the prevalence of cohabitation but also the characteristics of the pioneer group in adopting new demographic behaviour vary across countries. While in some countries the diffusion of cohabitation started from the couples who could not afford marriage, in others cohabitation was initially adopted by those who valued autonomy and rejected traditional institution and gender roles.

It was suggested that changes in attitudes toward family in combination with secularization were affecting the whole process of family formation and fertility (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988; Van de Kaa, 1996). First, the emergence of cohabiting unions in several European countries signified a protest against conventionalism of "petty bourgeois marriage" (Mason & Jensen, 1995), and was an expression of anti-authoritarian sentiments among women and men who held more egalitarian attitudes (Lesthaeghe & Neidert, 2006). Second, secularization as a manifestation of

individual autonomy is strongly related to cohabitation (Lesthaeghe, 1995). Higher secularism is positively correlated with the adoption of non-traditional union formation patterns (Thornton, Axinn, & Hill, 1992). Third, the accentuation on the quality of relationship (mutual understanding and trust) over the institutional foundations of marriage and parenthood (Surkyn & Lesthaeghe, 2004) may be related to changes in family behavior. Fourth, the shift from materialist to post-materialist values is associated with higher levels of tolerance for deviant minorities and for different life styles (for instance, homosexuality, abortion, non-marital childbearing) (Lesthaeghe, 2010), and lower levels of support for the traditional gender roles within household and importance of traditional marriage (Inglehart & Baker, 2000).

2.2.2 Cohabitation and changing values

Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory on reasoned action and planned behavior provide the earliest theoretical framework for linking attitude and behavior at the micro level, that is, individuals' positive attitude toward a certain behavior elevates the occurrence of that behavior (Barber & Axinn, 2005). According to this theoretical model, the spread of more accepting attitudes toward nonmarital cohabitation would be expected to increase the cohabitation rates at the micro level (Emens, Mitchell, & Axinn, 2008). However, they also suggested that the connection between attitudes and behaviors is also expected in the opposite direction. The cognitive consistency is key to understand the impact of behaviors on attitudes that individuals are driven to interpret their past behaviors in a favorable way (Festinger, 1957). In other words, individuals' preferences and expectations are affected by their previous experience. The experience of living together outside of marriage may change individuals' attitudes toward cohabitation.

One the one hand, attitudes toward cohabitation provide evidence on the acceptability of cohabitation as a normative living arrangement in a certain society, which is linked to individual's union formation. The rise in the acceptability of cohabitation and the decline of the importance of marriage can reasonably be interpreted as a signal of weakened social norms surrounding marriage, namely, the "deinstitutionalization of marriage" (Cherlin, 2004). Previous research from the U.S. (Axinn & Thornton, 1993) and Philippines (William, Kabamalan, & Ogena, 2007) documents that attitudes toward partnership and parenthood affect union formation. Those who report higher acceptance of cohabiting unions are more likely to cohabit. Conversely, couples with more

favorable attitudes toward marriage have a declined likelihood of living together unmarried than those with less commitment to marriage (Clarkberg, Stolzenberg, & Waite, 1995). As two moving targets, cohabitation (including meanings attached to or patterns and timing of cohabitation) and individuals' attitudes are dynamic. It is possible that the causal relationship between ideational changes and shifts in family behaviors is in both directions. Empirical evidence also shows that individuals with the experience of cohabitation are prone to report approval attitudes toward this union type (Coast, 2009; Willoughby & Carroll, 2012). Nevertheless, it is also quite possible that people virtually act contrary to their beliefs. Even though some people place a high value on marriage and express the intentions to marry, they may in fact enter into or stay in cohabiting unions. Certainly, the discrepancy between attitudes (or expectations) and behaviors can be partly attributed to economic and social barriers to marriage. The decision on marriage is a product of comprehensive evaluation based on current economic and social conditions (Gibson-Davis, Edin, & McLanahan, 2005).

Additionally, choosing cohabitation over marriage is found to be more common among people who hold more liberal attitudes and values toward a number of dimensions, for instance, in family, religiosity and gender roles. First, previous literature documents that cohabitation, unlike marriage, is associated with diminished religiosity (Village, Williams, & Francis, 2010; Uecker, Regnerus, & Vaaler, 2007). Prior studies examined the impact of religiosity on the propensity to cohabit versus to marry and showed that religiosity has a negative effect on individuals' possibilities of choosing cohabitation relative to marriage (Axinn & Thornton, 1992; Blom, 1994; Berrington & Diamond, 1999; Nazio & Blossfeld, 2003). This negative relationship is not only due to some religions frown upon unmarried cohabitation, but also because religious individuals tend to espouse more conservative attitudes that are less acceptable of living together outside of marriage (Clarkberg, Stolzenberg, & Waite, 1995; Brown, Lee, & Bulanda, 2006). Second, men who don't value success at work are more attracted to cohabitation, while women who think career success is important are drawn disproportionately toward cohabitation. Marriage is seen as constraining for both men and women because the traditional gender roles attached to marriage requiring men to be successful at market-oriented activities and making women secondary to their husbands in terms of career. Hence, men with egalitarian attitudes are more likely to cohabit than men with traditional gender-role attitudes in that egalitarian men are more open to alternative living

arrangements involving greater fairness in the labor division within household than marriage (Kaufman, 2000).

On the other hand, cohabitors are more likely to espouse more egalitarian gender role attitudes than their married counterparts (Lye & Waldron, 1997; Avellar & Smock, 2005) and are less dedicated to traditional family values (Kalmijn, Loeve, & Manting, 2007; Laughlin, Farrie, & Fagan, 2009). There are two main explanations, first, the nature of cohabitation — fragility, instability and lack of institutionalization — foster different attitudes toward labor division between couples. Cohabitors tend to express lower commitments and relationship quality compared to married couples (Nock, 1995), given the short relationship duration and low exit costs of cohabiting unions. Hence, cohabiting couples have less interest in the labor specialization. In addition, the incomplete institutionalization of cohabitation (Nock, 1995) leads to ambiguity in attitudes regarding the division of housework. Second, cohabitation may select couples with certain characteristics, which make them tend to be less sex-specialized (Barber & Axinn, 1998). Previous research shows that women with more traditional gender-role attitudes have a higher possibility of marrying than women with a more egalitarian gender ideology (Clarkberg, Stolzenberg & Waite, 1995).

Education is conceived as a proxy for ideational changes or cultural innovations in the Second Demographic Transition theory. Lesthaeghe and Surkyn (1988) stressed the implication of education for the value changes. They addressed that traditionalism in marriage, individual religious disposition, and conformism in socialization were negatively linked to individuals' educational attainments, while post-materialism, permissiveness in personal matters (for instance, abortion or homosexuality), valuing independence and self-fulfillment were positively associated with education. Ideational changes primarily took place among better educated people not only because of the income effect of education, but also features attached to education such as the decoding ability (Bourdieu, 1979; Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988). Educational attainments are usually achieved prior to major events of adult life such as union formation and childbearing. In the process of getting education, individuals have more access to advanced ideas and information that may guide family formation (Lesthaeghe & Moors, 2002; Thomson & Bernhardt, 2010). With greater exposure to new ideas, better educated populations are prone to accept and adopt new living arrangements and modern life styles, which subsequently spreads to lower educated population through "imitation" (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988).

Results from empirical studies are inconsistent. Some studies provide supports to this assumption, demonstrating that highly-educated individuals held more liberal attitudes and less supportive of authority, and thereby, cohabitation and extramarital childbearing were initially more common among highly educated women than those with less education (Baizán, Aassve, & Billari, 2003; Rosina & Fraboni, 2004). However, others show that the proportion of the approval of cohabitation among the college-educated was as high as those among the less-educated depending on couples' marriage plan (Sweet, 1989). Moreover, Thomson and Bernhardt (2010) found that education has no effect on the formation of cohabiting unions among Swedish young adults, implying that in the most advanced country in the second demographic transition, the educational pathway toward the formation of cohabitation has undergone a radical change. Furthermore, there is no evidence presenting the indirect impact of educational attainment on cohabitation through attitudes.

2.3   Socioeconomic circumstances and union status

There are two major theories concerning the correlation between economic resources and union formation from economists and demographers: Becker's "new family economics" and Oppenheimer's theories concerning marriage costs and timing.

2.3.1 The economic independence hypothesis

It has been suggested that the declining marriage rates and rising marital instability are mainly attributed to women's increasing economic independence. The role of women has been undergoing a considerable transformation during the past decades because of the dramatic increase in women's educational attainments and participation in the labor market. Congruence of the time point of women's rising labor-force involvement and the declining marriage rates raised theoretical considerations with regards to the familial implications of women's changing economic role.

An influential and long-standing tradition in theories with regards to family formation stress the importance of differentiated gender roles for marriage system. As early as the end of the 19th century, Emile Durkheim mentioned the remarkable effect of the sexual division of labor on the conjugal solidarity. In his masterful work, *The Division of Labor in Society* (first published in 1893,

1964), Durkheim stated that society has gone through structural transformations from mechanical solidarity, which is made up of the juxtaposition of similar but independent units, to organic solidarity, which were founded on the interdependence of economic and social roles. Accordingly, women retreated from warfare and public matters and dedicated her life to the family (Durkheim, 1964). When men and women were anatomically undifferentiated and performed similar functions, the conjugal solidarity was weak. Oppositely, the sexual division of labor was crucial to the solidarity of married partners. With the increase of interdependence, the union of men and women became more "intimate" and "indissoluble" (Durkheim, 1964; also see Cristi, 2012). Talcott Parsons (1949) emphasized this idea and argued that the sex-role segregation — men as the main breadwinners and women as housewives and care-takers, was a functional necessity for the stability of marriage and for the viability of the whole society. Parsons maintained that the sex-role segregation is the major mechanism preventing the potentially disruptive competition and conflict between wife and husband (Parsons, 1949). Since occupation is the main source of socioeconomic position, married women should decrease the involvement in the labor market to avoid the disruptive competition with husband and to maintain marital stability (Parsons, 1949).

Economic theories have continued elaborating the implication of sex-differentiated roles for marriage and family. In accordance with Durkheim's theory, Gary Becker (1981) argued that the major gain from marriage lies in the traditional labor division, namely, the mutual dependence of married couples. Becker's theory assumes that women and men choose marriage if they expect their utility levels will be raised compared to remaining single. The utility not only depends on the goods and services that can be purchased in the market, but also on nontransferable commodities produced in households including children, companionship, love, and health status. The utility maximization can be achieved by traditional labor specialization. Therefore, the major gain from marriage for both spouses goes beyond economies of scale, it focuses instead on the complementarity between women and men (Goode, 1963; Becker, 1974). That is, women rely on men for provision of food, housing and protection, and men rely on women for childbearing and childrearing and take care of the whole family. Biological differences in comparative advantages, specialized investments, and time allocation are key to explain the formation of this sex-role division of labor in households (Becker,1993). Women control the most important part of reproduction through biologically housing and feeding the fetus, delivering and feeding the baby. The biological differences in comparative advantage between men and women explain why

women usually spend their time on childbearing and childrearing, and are involved in other household activities, whereas men spend most of it on protection, food, and other market activities. In sum, given that the specialized investments in market and household skills depend on the allocation of time, these investments further reinforce their biological differences between men and women (Becker, 1993).

Considering the dramatic family changes during the past decades, Becker (1993, p350) suggested that the main cause is the increase in the earning power of women with the economic growth. The development in economies and the expansion of the service sector increased women's labor force participation. Thereby, the expectation of higher earnings and greater engagement in the labor force encourage women to invest more in the market-oriented human capital and spend a larger fraction of time at market activities, which further raise women's engagement and position in the labor market. Moreover, higher earnings and labor force participation of women lead to a decline of their gains from marriage and the labor division within households becomes less advantageous (Becker, Landes, & Michael, 1977; Becker, 1993, p55). Therefore, Becker's theory implies that the decreasing gain from marriage for women mainly leads to the decline of marriage (Sweeney, 2002).

Under the assumption of sexual role specialization, men with higher educational attainments and income are more likely to get married since higher socioeconomic status strengthens men's role as the breadwinner and thus makes them more attractive in the marriage market. Moreover, men with relatively high socioeconomic status gain more from marriage than men with low socioeconomic positions (Becker et al., 1977). On the one hand, if "higher-quality" (more property, income, or education) men marry "higher-quality" women, the positive assortative mating would maximize aggregate output. On the other hand, if men with high earning potential marry women with relatively low economic conditions, but superior in nonmarket characteristics, the gender specialization within marriage would maximize their gains from marriage. Oppositely, men with relatively low earnings potential are more difficult to find a mate in the marriage market. Consequently, men with low education and incomes may be more affected by the trend of growing economic independence of women than their better-educated and highly-paid counterparts.

In Becker's initial work, the definition of marriage depends on "whether a man and a woman share the same household", which "includes persons in 'consensual' and casual unions and excludes legally married persons who are separated", and thus it differs from the legal definition

(Becker, 1974, p306). Nevertheless, in *A Treatise on the Family* (Enlarged Edition), Becker (1993) defined marriage as "a long-term commitment between a man and a woman", which stressed the long-term protection function of marriage. It has been assumed that the most pervasive division of labor within families is men entirely specialized in gainful employment and women completely specialized in childbearing and other domestic activities. The nature of the gender-role division of labor implies that men are more able to enter into marital or consensual unions with several mates, simultaneously via polygyny or sequentially by union dissolution. Therefore, women demand a long-term "contract" from their husbands to protect themselves and their children against divorce, abandonment and other adversities (Becker, 1993). In all societies, marriage law has been developed to protect domestically specialized partners, usually women, by the provision of alimony and child support.

The economic independence hypothesis has a wide appeal among economists and sociologists as one of the most important explanations for the changes in family behavior (Goldscheider & Waite, 1986; Cherlin, 1992; McLanahan & Casper, 1995). However, this theory also receives extensive criticism for its theoretical grounds as well as its impact on marriage and union stability (Scanzoni, 1979; Blossfeld & Huinink, 1991; Blossfeld & Jaenichen, 1992; Oppenheimer, 1997; Moffit, 2000; Sweeney, 2002). Moreover, it has been suggested that this theory may be inappropriate for understanding family formation in more recent periods (Swenney, 2002), particularly when the rise in the "new" pattern of unions, cohabitation was not taken into account.

2.3.2 A theory of marriage timing

Oppenheimer (1994) criticized that the sexual specialization model is too risky and inflexible, especially for the nuclear family, so that a more adaptable strategy would be welcome for both men and women in order to make economic contributions to the family. She questioned the empirical evidence for the economic independence hypothesis by showing that women with greater economic resources tend to marry because they can ease the financial burden on men and maintain the household during the sudden economic pressure (Oppenheimer & Lew, 1995), and emphasized the role played by men. More importantly, Oppenheimer insisted that women and men are postponing marriages instead of foregoing them, so that cohabitation was a stage to rather than

a substitute for marriage. Her explanation of marriage delay focuses on two factors: uncertainty about economic prospects and the economic costs of marriage.

By applying the job-search theory to mate selection, Oppenheimer (1988) developed a conceptual framework to interpret how gender differentials in the timing of marriage changes with the growth of women's labor force participation. She challenged the statement that the decrease in gains from marriage due to the rise in women's economic independence is the preeminent factor in the delay of marriage, and focused on assortative mating, the transition to adult economic roles, and the selection process. The marriage timing of men depends on their economic characteristics. Young men's future prospects are often highly uncertain, which correspondingly leads to uncertainty in the mate selection process. A man can either postpone seriously searching for a mate to marry until his career is stabilized or lower the minimally acceptable match. For the impact of women's increasing labor force participation on marriage, Oppenheimer (1988) provided several interpretations regarding the process that are different from the economic independence hypothesis. First, the higher requirements for education brought by the growth of women's labor-market involvement lead to higher opportunity costs of dropping out of school to marry for women. Second, long-term and more female work involvement leads to a prolonged length of schooling and more requirements for a good match. Third, women's increasing labor participation may encourage the delay of marriage not only due to economic independence, but also because of the reducing reliance on their parents.

2.3.3 Costs of marriage and men's economic opportunities

Malthus (1826, p269) asserted that "it is clearly the duty of each individual not to marry until he has the prospect of supporting his children". Historically, couples delayed their marriage until they were able to establish an independent household, either through building up sufficient resources or by inheritance (Hajnal, 1965; Berkner, 1972). Hence, the long tradition in historical demographic research regarding marriage was rooted in the idea that the formation of marital unions required a secure economic foundation (Hajnal, 1965; Easterlin, 1987; Oppenheimer, 1994). The establishment and maintenance of a new household involves a high economic burden, including a wedding and a proper place to live, which deters those who cannot afford these costs from marrying (Lichter, Batson, & Brown 2004; Edin & Reed, 2005; McCall & Percheski, 2010).

Furthermore, there is a salient threshold in marriage decisions, termed as "marriageability threshold", which implies the expectation of the long-term acceptable living standard (Oppenheimer, 1994).

Oppenheimer's explanation regarding the delay of marriage puts more emphasis on men than on women. She observed the rapid deterioration of men's economic position in the late 1980s, particularly among lower educated men, and realized the potential role of young men's uncertain and poor economic prospects in the postponement of marriage. As mentioned before, the economic capability to establish an independent household is key to the formation of marital unions. Therefore, young men in a stage of "career immaturity" usually have relatively low incomes, which makes it difficult for them to find a potential marriage partner and to set up an independent household, even at the socially defined minimal standards (Oppenheimer, Kalmijn, & Lim, 1997; Oppenheimer, 2003). In addition, uncertainties for young men's future prospects affect the process of assortative mating, and thereby lead to the postponement of marriage. Concerning that marriages are supposed to be a long-term commitment, the lack of adequate "cues" regarding the long-run living standard due to the uncertainties about the key attributes that people want to match will hinder assortative mating process and thus may result in either longer searching time in the marriage market, or entry into nonmarital cohabitation as an interim living arrangement. Hence, the role of men's economic resources in family formation remains a crucial position.

2.3.4 Women's bargaining power

The traditional marriage bargain stressed by Becker and Parsons is gender-specialized, by which men trade income from market-oriented work for child care and other housework, and women trade home-oriented skills for men's economic support to their households. Nevertheless, contemporary marriages and partnerships are more symmetrical rather than specialized. The roles of husbands and wives have become more similar as women are more involved in the labor market and men do a greater share of the housework and childcare (Young & Willmont, 1973). The process of marriage bargain may change in accordance with the symmetrization of gender division of labor within households. Cherlin (2000) provided another interpretation for the delayed marriage that focuses more on women with higher socioeconomic status instead of men, "…the bargaining position of women has improved and that women are using their improved bargaining

position not just to search for men with higher earning potential but also to search for men who will share more equitably in home production: housework and child care" (p.131).

Women's bargaining position has enhanced due to their increased earning potential relative to men, but changes in marital behavior can mainly be attributable to women with better economic resources because their earning potential has increased faster than men's. Moreover, the contraceptive evolution and the legalization of abortion have decreased women's ability to marry, they can no longer trade sexual access for marriage nor can they convince men to marry because of pregnancy (Akerlof, Yellen, & Katz, 1996). However, these changes have diverse impacts on women with different earning potentials. For women with lower earning potential, their bargaining position has weakened, and the possibility of marriage has declined. Contrarily, for women with better socioeconomic status, the contraceptive evolution and the legalization of abortion have given them greater control over their own fertility; at the same time, they have become more attractive in the marriage market since men increasingly recognize the value of women's economic position, and thereby increase their bargaining position. Thus, the rise in women's economic resources improves their bargaining power but postpones their marriage.

2.3.5 The role of cohabitation in union formation

Oppenheimer (1988; 1997; 2003) argued that cohabitation is an adaptive strategy during the period of career immaturity; instead, marriage is more likely to be the final goal of couples. Cohabitation provides many of the benefits of marriage such as the economies of scale and the pool of resources[5], and facilitates the interactions between couples to increase their mutual adaptations and knowledge of a potential marriage partner. Moreover, cohabitation reduces the uncertainties for marriage. Young people can live together unmarried until they achieve a more established work identity or economic conditions; meanwhile, they can maintain an intimate relationship and do not incur high-cost mate searching activities. Therefore, cohabitation is viewed as a stage in the transition to marriage rather than a substitute for marriage (also see Bumpass, Sweet, & Cherlin, 1991; Lichter, et al., 1992; Cherlin, 1999).

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[5] Married couples are far more likely to pool all their money, while cohabiting couples prefer the partial pool or the dependent management system (Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2000; Heimdal & Houseknecht, 2003; Vogler, 2005; Treas & De Ruijter, 2008), except that they have a biological child together (McRae, 1993; Winkler, 1997; Lewis, 2001).

Cherlin (2000) emphasized the role of cohabitation in the searching and bargaining processes of marriage among women with higher earning potential, as complementary to Oppenheimer's interpretations. Women who have better economic prospects can bargain for a more equal labor division in households, they may extend their searching process to include cohabitation as an information-gathering stage to observe men's skills and preferences for home production at a close range. On the contrary, women with lower earning potentials may have been disadvantaged by the adoption of cohabitation because of the losing bargain power. The decline in incomes and job stability of blue-collar men leads to the enhanced difficulties for women with lower economic status to find a "marriageable" men who meet the cultural expectations of having the capacity to provide steady earnings. Considering the growing acceptability of cohabitation and unmarried births, cohabitation may have become a "budget way" to start a family even though they highly value marriage (Furstenberg, 1996). As a result, cohabitation may play a different role in the process of union formation and marriage bargain for women with different economic resources.

It is noteworthy that the role of cohabitation changes across countries and over time. When cohabitation was a deviant behavior, it used to be viewed as a transitory stage in the marriage process. Cohabitation may serve as a form of engagement, a prelude to marriage with firm intentions to marry (Casper & Bianchi, 2001); or it may be viewed as a testing stage for marriage in respond to economic uncertainties (Bernhardt & Hoem, 1985; Oppenheimer, 1988; Seltzer, 2004). Some argued that cohabitation is an alternative to singlehood, stressing more the dissimilarities between cohabitors and married people (Rindfuss & VandenHeuvel, 1990). With the prevalence of cohabitation, it may finally become an alternative to marriage (Kiernan, 2002; Hiekel, Liefbroer, & Poortman, 2014), especially for the first partnership and the first birth. Consequently, the role of cohabitation in union formation varies due to the heterogeneity of cohabitation. More exactly, the onset, spread, and timing of cohabitation vary across countries and across subgroups within a country. Different countries not only are situated in the different stages of the process of cohabitation prevalence, but also vary in the speed of cohabitation diffusion.

2.3.6 Empirical evidence

A body of literature sought to evaluate the effect of men's and women's economic resources on encouraging or inhibiting marriage (e.g. Landale & Forste, 1991; Lichter et al., 1992; McLaughlin

& Lichter, 1993; McLanahan & Casper, 1995). Results consistently show that better economic conditions of men facilitate marriage. More specifically, men with high education, high earnings, and stable employment are more likely to marry than those with poor economic resources (Lichter, LeClere, & McLaughlin, 1991; Lichter et al., 1992; Lloyd & South, 1996; Oppenheimer Kalmijn, & Lim, 1997; Smock & Manning, 1997; Sweeney, 2002). However, the influence of women's socioeconomic status on union formation is unclear. Some studies supported the economic independence hypothesis, presenting a negative association between women's economic situation and marriage (Luxán, Miret, & Treviño, 1999 for Spain; Baizán, Aassve, & Billari, 2004 for Germany; Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2008, for Spain and Portugal). Other results show that women's economic resources have little impact on the probability of marriage or else positive effect in several countries (Lichter et al., 1992; McLaughlin & Lichter, 1993, Oppenheimer & Lew, 1995, Thornton, Axinn, & Teachman, 1995; Sweeney, 2002, for the U.S.; Berrington & Diamond, 2000, for the UK; Liefbroer & Corijn, 1999, for the Netherlands; Bracher & Santow, 1998, for Sweden; Blossfeld & Huinink, 1991, for Germany).

The rise in cohabitation has further complicated the link between socioeconomic status and partnership behavior. Historically, there were subgroups of the population tending to cohabit more than others: first, the poor and certain groups of rural dwellers. In Sweden, for instance, due to the industrialization and urbanization at the end of nineteenth century, people who moved from rural areas to urban areas could not afford to marry and so living together under high population density, which termed as "Stockholm marriage" (Trost, 1978). Second, those who were ideologically opposed to the church and the religious marriage (Trost, 1978, for Sweden; Roberts, 1973, for Britain; Villeneuve-Gokalp, 1991, for France; Abrams, 1993, for Germany), most of whom were intellectuals. Third, those whose relationship had broken up but were unable or hardly be able to obtain a divorce due to high costs or more stringency of divorce.

Empirical evidence from the US suggests that economic resources are less important prerequisites for cohabitation than for marriage (Schoen & Weinick, 1993; Clarkberg, 1999). Although cohabitation has increased at all educational levels, a large educational differential still persists (Lundberg & Pollak, 2013). Results show that men with a college degree have lower probabilities of cohabitation but higher odds of marrying than their lower-educated counterparts (Oppenheimer, 2003). Moreover, the proportion of 19- to 44- year-old women who had ever cohabited was higher among those who had attended some college than their counterparts who had

not (Kennedy & Bumpass, 2008). Xie et al. (2003) also found a negative effect of education on entry into cohabitation for women. Nevertheless, when they examined the link between earnings potential and cohabitation, no significant effect was found for either men or women. In addition, it has been suggested that cohabitation may play a quite different role in the marital life course of women with high education and low education (Lundberg & Pollak, 2013). Serial cohabitations are overrepresented among economically disadvantaged women and men and, for less-educated and lower-paid people, cohabiting unions tend to end in dissolution rather than marriage (Lichter & Qian, 2008). In contrast, for highly-educated and well-paid people, cohabitation is more likely to transit to marriage and rarely involves childbearing.

Given that the prevalence, timing, and nature of cohabitation vary substantially across countries (Liefbroer & Dourleijn, 2006; Kalmijn, 2011; Kasearu & Kutsar, 2011) and over time, cohabitors are a more heterogeneous group in Europe. The mixed findings on the effect of women's economic circumstance on union formation may result from the different measures of economic characteristics[6] or they occur due to different national contexts. According to Thomson and Bernhardt (2010), the impact of women's economic resources on union formation depends on the degree of gender equality in the society. In countries with a strong tradition of sex specialization, highly educated women are less likely to choose marriage. Their high earning potential brings significant opportunity costs of marriage and childbearing. On the other hand, in countries with generous supports for gender equality, the earning potential of the highly-educated makes women better equipped to reduce the risks of their families and hence they become more attractive in the marriage market. Moreover, Sobotka (2008) suggests that the role of education in the spread of a new living arrangement depends on structural factors for initiating the change in family behavior, for example, whether it emerged in an economic affluent environment or in adverse structural conditions.

Empirical evidence from Sweden shows a positive effect of education on entry into cohabitation among women (Bracher & Santow, 1998; Goldscheider, Turcotte, & Kopp, 2001), but not among men (Bracher & Santow, 1998). Thomson and Bernhart (2010) reported no significant impact of education among young Swedes. A recent Finnish study demonstrates a

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[6] Prior empirical studies used different measures of economic resources, including educational attainment and enrolment (i.e. Xie et al., 2003; Hango & Le Bourdais, 2007; Winkler-Dworak & Toulemon, 2007; Kennedy & Bumpass, 2008; Thomson & Bernhart, 2010), employment and income (i.e. Sweeney, 2002; Oppenheimer, 2003; Xie et al., 2003; Winkler-Dworak & Toulemon, 2007).

consistent and positive relationship between education and entry into both marriage and cohabitation for both women and men (Jalovaara, 2012). However, a stronger positive effect of a university education has been found on direct marriage than on cohabitation for both sexes. Moreover, it seems that a higher level of education plays a marriage-promoting role among cohabitors (Mäenpää, 2009; Mäenpää & Jalovaara, 2013). For Spain, Baizán and colleagues (2003) found a positive educational gradient for cohabitation and a negative gradient for the first marriage among Spanish young women. Moreover, having a paid job reduces women's intensity of union formation, but the effect is smaller for cohabitation than marriage. Another study confirmed that in Spain college-educated women are more likely than women with primary education in Spain to enter into cohabitation than to remain single (Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2008). However, their results demonstrated that the impact of women's employment status on union formation varied across age cohorts. For the youngest cohort, employed women have a higher probability of entry into cohabitation versus marriage than unemployed women. For Portugal the result was different in that college-educated women in the youngest cohort had a lower probability of entry into cohabitation. But the effect of employment on union formation among the youngest cohort is similar to that of their counterparts in Spain. Furthermore, research using more recent data in Spain shows an insignificant relationship between women's education and entry into cohabitation (Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2013). Hence, the link between economic resources and the adoption of cohabitation among men and women may differ not only across countries but also change over time.

2.4 Economic status and living arrangements of parents

Cohabitation has not only growingly been involved in the union formation but also becomes a normative context for childbearing and childrearing. Therefore, the share of children residing with married parents has been steadily declining with an increasing number of children born to and grow up in cohabiting families. However, the implications of the rise in cohabitation for child well-being are unclear, in part because very little is known about the socioeconomic characteristics of cohabiting parents. Noteworthily, McLanahan and Jacobsen (2015) suggested that family behavior of women may be different from that of mothers, so that if "…highly educated women may be more willing and able to experiment with new ideas and lifestyles than less educated women, their

motivation may change once they decide to become mothers" (p.18). Consequently, empirical evidence on couples in general may not be completely applicable to parents.

In the light of the Second Demographic Transition theory, the highly educated people with their greater exposure to new ideas and values are expected to have a higher propensity to adopt new family behavior such as childbearing and childrearing within cohabitation because they may pursue more liberal and distinctive lifestyles and be more resistant to the attached stigmas to this life pattern. Given that education is considered as an approach for the transformation of values, more highly-educated persons tend to have children within cohabitation than those with less education, particularly at the start of the phenomenon. Nevertheless, this theory has been criticized for not fully interpreting the diversity in the transition to parenthood within cohabitation (Sobotka, 2008; Lappegård, Klüsener, & Vignoli, 2014), and very limited empirical research has provided direct support for this theory.

An alternative explanation stresses the notion of "blocked opportunities" stemming from the economic constraints and economic uncertainty of people with low socioeconomic circumstances (Billy & Moore, 1992; Oppenheimer, 1994; Kiernan, 2004; Perelli-Harris et al., 2010). Among disadvantaged populations or during the economic recession, social and cultural norms regarding appropriate family behaviors may lose ground. Oppenheimer's theory on the marriage timing suggests that people with less economic resources may choose cohabitation as an adaptive strategy during a period of economic uncertainty. Once their economic conditions become stable or satisfy a certain standard, they will get married. Nevertheless, when a woman in disadvantaged circumstances perceives little opportunity of greatly improving her economic conditions or experiencing upward social mobility, she may stay and give birth in cohabitation due to the lack of enough resources to turn their relationship into marriage and considering the age limit for female fertility. In contrast, women with more economic resources are conscious of her greater potential to success, they may get married directly or transit into marriage when they decide to have a child. Considering that marriage is commonly viewed as the best arrangement for raising children, couples with sufficient economic conditions will get married considering the interests of their child. Moreover, costs of an out-of-wedlock birth for mothers with higher economic status are higher than mothers with lower economic position. As a result, if marriage signifies stability and cohabitation is related to uncertainty, the most highly-educated would be more likely to choose

marriage relative to cohabitation. This relationship would become more pronounced when children are involved.

Most of the empirical evidence demonstrates that cohabiting parents tend to be less educated and have unstable employment and lower incomes than married parents (Bumpass & Lu, 2000; Brown, 2004; Kennedy & Bumpass, 2008; Wu & Musick, 2008; Kennedy & Thomson, 2010). Even in Sweden where childbearing within cohabitation is more widespread, the most highly-educated Swedish parents prone to give birth in marriage, while those with less education tend to bear children within cohabitation (Kennedy & Thomson, 2010). Moreover, childbearing within cohabitation has been found to be related to a negative educational gradient in other countries (Hobcraft & Kiernan, 2001, for Britain; Perelli-Harris et al. 2010, for Austria, West Germany, Norway, France, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands; Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2011, for Russia). Studies from the U.S. also show that a strong positive impact of mother's education on marriage has remained over time (Bumpass & Lu, 2000; Wu & Musick, 2008). Therefore, the higher the educational level of a woman is, the more likely she is to give birth within marriage and the less likely she is to bear children within cohabitation.

However, most of the prior literature focused on mothers or parents (combined mothers and fathers together) and only a few researchers examined the impact of fathers' socioeconomic characteristics on union status. Research from the U.S shows that father's education and employment are positively related to the likelihood of marriage, and discourages cohabitation (Carlson, McLanahan, & England, 2004), the relevant empirical research in Europe is very limited. Furthermore, other studies suggested an inverse causal relationship between union status and economic resources. Considering that cohabitation is usually viewed as a less committed and less institutionalized form of relationship, it may not award the same benefits as marriage in terms of economic resources (Osborne, Manning, & Smock, 2007).

Fatherhood is associated with high wage and wage increase, termed as "fatherhood premium" (Townsend, 2002; Knoester & Eggebeen, 2006; Augustine, Nelson, & Edin, 2009; Killewald, 2012). The increased cost of supporting children leads fathers to be more productive than childless men. Moreover, employers may have biased views of fathers, perceiving them as more responsible workers with higher loyalty or dependability compared with childless men, which further result in higher wages, more frequent promotions, and better evaluations to fathers (Etaugh & Folger, 1998; Fuegen et al., 2004; Correll, Bernard, & Paik, 2007; Hodges & Budig, 2010). Empirical results

present that the wage premium for fatherhood persists after controlling for fathers' work hours and other relevant factors (Lundberg & Rose, 2002; Glauber, 2008). Fatherhood premium not only reflect in the rise in wage but also in their employment situation (Millimet, 2000). Furthermore, being a father and a husband reinforce each other (Ihinger-Tallman, Pasley, & Buehler, 1993; Killewald, 2012). Married men were also found having an earning advantage relative to unmarried men, even after controlling for other characteristics (Ginther & Zavodny, 2001; Antonovics & Town, 2004), termed as "marriage premium" (Hill, 1979; Cohen, 2002). Cohen (2002) suggests that cohabiting men may also enjoy a wage premium relative to single men, but this advantage is smaller than that of married men. Prior studies found that fatherhood premium is larger for married fathers than for unmarried fathers (Glauber, 2008; Hodges & Budig, 2010). However, little attention has been paid to variations in the fatherhood premium between married and cohabiting fathers (see exception, Killewald, 2012). As stated by Killewald (2012, p. 99) "fatherhood should be less ambiguous and more focused on the providership for married fathers than for cohabiting fathers". Considering that both marriage and fatherhood are consistent with hegemonic masculinity as it is institutionalized in the workplace, employers may stigmatize cohabiting fathers when cohabitation and childbearing outside of marriage are perceived as a signal of irresponsibility. Findings indicate that married, residential fathers are more advantaged economically than their cohabiting counterparts (Killewald 2012).

On the contrary, motherhood is related to the wage penalty (Waldfogel, 1997; Budig & England, 2001; Glauber, 2007). There are some explanations of the "motherhood penalty" (Budig & England, 2001): first, women spend time to give birth and care for their children, which interrupts their job training and employment, in particular, full-time work experience; second, women are more likely to trade off higher incomes for jobs that are easier to combine with parenting; third, women make less job effort and are less productive when they become mothers because taking care of children is exhausting and time-consuming; fourth, employers discriminate against women with children due to their motherhood, for instance, placing mothers in less promising occupations, with lower promotion opportunities and less paid. Furthermore, in accordance to men's "marriage wage premium", women are suggested to suffer from the "marriage wage penalty" given the increase in the amount of time and energy that women are spending on the household after getting married (Bianchi et al., 2000). The underlying assumption of this argument is the traditional household gender specialization (Becker, 1981). However, empirical

studies frequently found opposite findings that women in both marriage and cohabitation enjoy a wage premium (Waldfogel, 1997; Taniguchi, 1999; Budig & England, 2001; Glauber, 2007). In addition, although motherhood penalty remains strong, it does not vary significantly by parents' living arrangements (Killewald & Gough, 2013). That is, mother's union status does not moderate the correlation between motherhood and their earnings losses.

Finally, the link between parents' economic resources and union status varies across countries and over time. Kennedy and Thomson (2010) argue that the socioeconomic differentials in fertility behavior by union statuses depend on the diffusion of the phenomenon. The contexts in which nonmarital births and cohabitation are uncommon with limited employment opportunities for women, education has little or a positive effect on childbearing within cohabitation, such as in Italy, Spain, and West Germany in the early 1990s (Konietzka & Kreyenfeld, 2002). Furthermore, although the Second Demographic Transition theory might function in the initial stages of the diffusion of childbearing within cohabitation, the educational gradient was reversed once the phenomenon became widespread (Perelli-Harris et al. 2010). For example, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the most highly educated women have been found to initiate the rise in childbearing within cohabitation in France and Italy. Nevertheless, the most highly-educated have become more likely to give birth within marriage rather than cohabitation since the start of 2000s.

2.5   Summary

In Europe, changes in partnership and parenthood behavior have spread from Northern Europe to Western Europe, and more recently to Southern Europe and the post-communist countries of Eastern Europe (Surkyn & Lesthaeghe, 2004; Sobotka, 2008). The onset and the intensity of the rise in cohabitation and childbearing within cohabitation, as well as the economic status of cohabitors and cohabiting parents vary across countries and over time (Esteve, Lesthaeghe, & López-Gay, 2012; Perelli-Harris et al., 2012; Ní Bhrolcháin & Beaujouan, 2013). The Second Demographic Transition theory views cultural and ideational changes as the driving force behind the prevalence of the new family behavior. In this case, the new family behavior is first heralded by the more educated and economically privileged population, who are more influenced by the trend of individualism and secularism, and value freedom and self-fulfillment. Cohabitation and

childbearing within cohabitation are viewed as a symbol of resistance to traditional marriage and freedom of thinking and behaving.

Becker's *New Economics of the Family* emphasized the effect of women's economic independence on family changes. Marriage is seen as an institution based on the sexual specialization of labor, so that both husbands and wives would gain through trading the fruits of their different skills, and their utility would be maximized if men specialized in market-oriented work and women specialized in home-oriented work. However, owing to the transformation of economic structure and globalization, women have become more involved in the labor market and attained higher achievements in education and their career, which undermines the foundation of marriage. Therefore, an important corollary of this theory is that women with higher labor force participation or earning potential have lower possibilities of getting married because they would gain less from marriage (Cherlin, 2000). However, little direct empirical evidence has been found to support these two theories. Oppositely, more results have shown that women's socioeconomic status either had no effect or a positive impact on their likelihood of marriage (Cherlin, 1980; Sweeney, 1997; Waite & Spitze, 1981; Oppenheimer, 1997). Oppenheimer (1988; 1997; 2003) focused more on the role of men's economic insecurity. The basic idea is the growing uncertainties of young men's future economic status leading to the delay of marriage. Concerning the decline of young men's job stability and income, they have come to prefer women with better market-oriented skills, to counter risks from structural shifts in industrial societies. Cohabitation is a strategy to confront uncertainties and marriage is delayed rather than denied.

Much attention has been given to children in cohabiting unions along with the dramatic rise in cohabitation. Over time, cohabitation has shifted from a rare and deviant behavior to a socially accepted context for partnership and childbearing. Children have higher probabilities of living in cohabiting families either as a result of being born to cohabiting parents or because of parent's entry into cohabitation. However, most of previous studies regarding economic resources and union status did not distinguish parents from childless couples. Therefore, previous findings on the characteristics of cohabiors compared to their married counterparts may not completely applicable to those of parents. In order to understand the implications of the rapid rise in cohabitation for child well-being in Spain, studies concerning the socioeconomic profiles of parents and the association with child well-being are needed across countries and over time.

Chapter 3 Theoretical framework: Macro-level factors related to union status

3.1   Introduction

A body of prior studies attributed the rise in cohabitation and childbearing within cohabiting unions to the ideational and cultural transformations (Van de Kaa, 2001; Lesthaeghe, 2010), as well as women's and men's economic circumstances (Oppenheimer, 1994; Xie et al., 2003; Kalmijn, 2011; Perelli-Harris et al., 2012). Less attention has been paid to the interaction between institutional contexts and individual's union formation. Research on family behaviors cannot be isolated from political and institutional circumstances (Gauthier, 1998; Salles & Dutreuilh, 2006). As shown in previous studies, family policies play an important role in childbearing behavior and fertility (McDonald, 2006; Hoem, 2008; Neyer & Andersson, 2008). The increase in cohabitation and childbearing within cohabitation raises questions about the legal positions of cohabitors and their children, and the assumptions on which family policies are built encourage or discourage cohabitation other than marriage. Considering that many European governments have recognized the important changes in union behavior and responded in different ways, it is important to get knowledge on the implications of institutional contexts for the well-being of children in different living arrangements.

Individuals' behaviors and welfare are inevitably affected by institutional factors such as family policy and legal regulation of unmarried cohabitation. Prior studies suggested that family policy has a significant influence on individuals' partnership behavior (Becker, Landes, & Michael, 1977; Wu & Pollard, 2000; McLanahan & Carlson, 2002; Popenoe, 2009). Moreover, given that marriage is endowed by a set of legal entitlements in almost all nations, the gap in legal rights and obligations between cohabitors and married people may play a role in couples' decisions on their union status as well as their prospective well-being. Hence, by analyzing the connection between the two macro-level factors and parents' living arrangements, more knowledge on the role of formal institutional factors in the spread of cohabitation as well as on the diversity in its diffusion across countries can be obtained.

3.2   Family policy

The development of family policy and demographic transitions is mainly attributed to the structural transformations inside labor markets, which resulted from technological innovations and international trades. The share of employment in agriculture and manufacturing sector sharply decreased (Iversen & Cusack, 2000). In contrast, service and informal sector, self-employment and temporary employment are expanding (Moghadam, 2015). Given that men used to work in traditional sectors with low requirements of skills and educational levels, their economic status has dramatically declined due to the economic globalization. Nevertheless, the pursuit of low labor cost elevated the demands for female labor forces. Furthermore, the economic insecurity brought by the unemployment of male breadwinners increased the supply of job-seeking women (Moghadam, 2015). As a result, women have become more competitive and more involved in many kinds of jobs, despite the fact that they are still disadvantaged in the labor market in terms of income and occupational segregation. Moreover, challenges promoted by the economic globalization and family changes fuel the demands for state support and risk sharing. Hence, many European governments have shifted their role from taking compensatory responsibilities to a preventive and active social investment strategy (Nikolai, 2012), in order to secure family functioning, reconcile employment and family responsibilities, enhance children well-being, and promote gender equality (Iversen & Cusack, 2000; Scheve & Slaughter, 2004; Morgan, 2012).

3.2.1   Family policy regimes in Europe

European countries are categorized into different welfare regimes according to their distinct strategies for supporting families (Korpi, 2000; Esping-Andersen, 2002; Gauthier, 2002; Pfau-Effinger, 2005; Engster & Stensöta, 2011). Although states offer various supports to families through a set of policies in public education, employment, social insurance and pension schemes, a narrower perspective is generally used to define the family policies in literature. That is, the financial assistance and services to families with children directly provided by states (Gauthier, 2002; Engster & Stensöta, 2011). In this regard, paid parenting leaves, child allowance and tax benefits, and public services for childcare are usually taken as the most essential policy domains for classifying the family policy regimes (Engster & Stensöta, 2011).

Based on the typology proposed by Esping-Andersen (1990) in the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Gauthier (2002) identified four main family policy regimes: the Socio-Democratic regime; the Conservative regime; the Southern European regime; and the Liberal regime. First, the Socio-Democratic regime characterizes family policy in the Nordic countries. This regime provides universal state support to families through sufficient parental time, generous financial support and high-qualified formal childcare services (Engster & Stensöta, 2011), which encourages equalitarian gender division of labor within the household (Gauthier, 2002). The Nordic countries are in the lead with respect to the generosity and availability of family policy that result in more equal gender division with a high rate of female labor force participation and male involvement in households. Generous leave schemes allow parents to take considerable time with their children, high income compensation rates and leaves reserved for fathers encourage paternal involvement in childcare, and a high provision of public child care for preschool children with low cost and high quality encourages mothers to return to their previous work (Gupta, Smith, & Verner 2008).

Second, the Conservative regime offers high levels of financial benefits for families with children (Fagnani & Math, 2008), but such support is still marked by conservatism in that it maintains a more traditional view of the gender division in household (Engster & Stensöta, 2011). Furthermore, countries in this regime are fairly heterogeneous regarding leave entitlements and childcare service. Germany used to encourage mothers to withdraw from the labor market and stay at home in order to take care of their children by providing long duration of leaves with relatively low-income replacement rates (Salles, Rossier, & Brachet, 2010), and limited public childcare services for children under three-year-olds (Fagnani, 2012). Nevertheless, German family policy experienced a decisive reform in 2006 when the federal government replaced the means tested flat rate childrearing benefit (*Erziehungsgeld*) — primarily aimed at mothers — with parental benefit (*Elterngeld*). In France, the investment in childcare provisions for children under 3 is much higher than in other continental countries. The extension of the public care provision and the reduction of the childcare costs for families indicate that France is heading toward the "Nordic path", which focuses on achieving work/family balance and enhancing mothers' employment (Fagnani & Math, 2008). Nevertheless, the longer parental leave and the allowance to all stay-at-home parents encourage mothers take the care responsibilities of children at home (Salles, Rossier, & Brachet, 2010). Therefore, the model of male breadwinner families continues to shape this family welfare

regime despite that reforms have been introduced in recent years (Thévenon, 2011), but their policy strategies are increasingly heterogeneous.

Third, the Liberal regime characterizes family policy in Anglo-Saxon countries. This regime offers low levels of public support to families, with high eligibility requirements for family welfare benefits (Gauthier, 2002), and policies are characterized by market-oriented management, strengthened family-carer-role of women, and low levels of encouragement to father involvement in childcare (Thévenon, 2011). In the UK, the reconciliation between paid work and care was traditionally treated as a "private" matter for families themselves (Brannen & Lewis, 2000), but an explicit family policy has been developed by the Labour Government since 1997. The provision of cash benefits aims to encourage mothers' labor force participation and thereby, to combat child poverty (Penn & Randall, 2005; Lewis & Campbell, 2007). Moreover, paid maternity leave has been extended from 14 weeks to 39 weeks, making it the longest paid maternity leave in the EU country (Deven & Moss, 2002). Paternity leave was introduced in 2002, but the flat rate payment compromises father's choice to take this paid leave (Daly & Scheiwe, 2010). Notably, the new revised scheme increased parental leave for parents from 13 to 18 weeks and was legally enacted on 8 March 2013 (O'Brien et al., 2014), yet, the family policy in the UK still endorses mothers as primary care givers (Daly & Scheiwe, 2010).

Fourth, the Southern European regime characterizes family policy in Spain, Italy, Portugal and Greece. As concluded by Flaquer (2000), the traits of this regime are a high degree of fragmentation along occupational lines (Ferrera, 1996), a mix between public and private in benefits and services, and no statutory minimum income schemes at the national level. In the last two decades, there has been a significant reform in family policy in Spain (more detailed information will be introduced in Chapter 5), such as improvements in childcare services, the rise of family benefits, the extension of parental leave and the introduction of paternity leave (Arriba & Moreno, 2005; Baizán, 2009; Azmat & González, 2010; Escobedo & Wall, 2015), but public supports to families are still limited compared to Scandinavian countries. Specifically, the income replacement of parental leaves is low (despite the duration is long), the duration of the full-paid paternity leave is short (two weeks), the formal care services available to children under three is limited and varies across regions (Naldini & Jurado, 2013). Therefore, the less generous and less universal family welfare in Mediterranean countries results in more intensive intergenerational and

intra-generational help by extended family and kinship, which also strengthens individuals' family loyalties and family ties.

However, this typology does not fully capture the country range and variation in Europe because it is difficult to fit Eastern European countries into any of the categories. Hence, the Eastern European regime is classified as the fifth family policy regime in this analysis. Eastern European nations form a more heterogeneous regime (Luci-Greulich & Thévenon, 2013). In many of these countries, family policies have been moving toward the re-familization (Saxonberg & Szelewa, 2007), with the decline of the paid parental leaves and the decrease of public childcare provision (Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2006). During the communist era, the public childcare system was well-developed, and the replacement rates of maternity leave were extremely generous (Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2006). However, instead of continuing the path of defamilization (Esping-Andersen, 1999), these countries have moved back to the path of re-familization by encouraging women to leave the labor market and take childcare responsibilities during the post-communist transition (Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2006). The general trend in family policies is that maternity leave becomes longer with relatively high replacement rates (70% in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, 100% in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania); paternity leave is granted or a certain period of parental leave is reserved to fathers but with low levels of income replacement benefits; the income-tested child benefits have been replaced the universal ones (for instance, in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia); and the funding for public childcare facilities has been radically cut (e.g. in the Czech Republic, Latvia, and Slovakia) (Robila, 2012).

3.2.2 The cross-national comparison of family policy

The generosity and universalization of family policy reflect the degrees of public protections and supports to families with children, which may also vary by couples' living arrangements. According to Engster and Stensöta (2011), family policy may contribute to reduce child poverty through the direct provision of financial benefits or by encouraging the labor market participation of both parents especially mothers to enhance the household incomes. In order to understand the associations between family policy, parents' union statuses, and child economic well-being, it is essential to know the diversity in family policy between Spain and countries of different welfare regimes. I followed the study of Engster and Stensöta (2011) by focusing on the diversities in three

aspects of family policy in Spain and other five European countries: family cash and tax benefits, paid parenting leaves, and public spending on childcare and early education service.

First, family cash and tax benefits include direct cash support (e.g. monthly family allowance payment) and indirect financial support (e.g. tax relief for dependent children) offered by states. By providing cash benefits and tax allowance, family cash and tax benefits can enhance family incomes and combat child poverty (Rainwater & Smeeding, 2003; Misra et al., 2012). This indicator demonstrates the annual amount of (direct and indirect) financial benefits received by families with children. Engster and Stensöta (2011) applied the method developed by Gauthier (2002) to measure the amount of family cash and tax benefits in different nations. Specifically, family cash and tax benefits are calculated by taking the disposable income ("take-home pay" after taxes and cash transfers) of a two-parent-two-child family and subtracting the disposable income (after taxes and cash transfers) of a childless single individual from this figure. Then, the difference between these two figures shows the financial benefits of a two-parent two-child family and is expressed as a percentage of the wage of an "average worker" [7] (Gauthier, 2010) who is single without children.

Table 3.1: Percentage of family cash and tax benefits for selected years, by country

	1985	1996	2001	2006	2014
Spain	6.3	8.6	11.1	9.0	9.8
Czech Republic	33.9*	19.6	26.2	28.6	27.6
Germany	18.5	33.1	36.8	34.2	30.6
France	19.2	17.7	17.2	16.4	15.3
Sweden	17.0	11.3	14.4	11.7	8.8
UK	18.6	10.9	16.0	9.2	6.5

Note: * 1993 was the earliest year for the Czech Republic from the OECD database in *The Tax/benefit position of production workers 1990-1993*.
Source: Data used to compute family cash and tax benefits come from the OECD database. *The Tax/benefit position of production workers 1984-1987*; *The Tax-benefit position of employees 1996*; *Taxing wages* (2001-2015).

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[7] Average worker refers to "an adult full-time worker in the private sector whose wage earnings are equal to the average wage earnings of such workers" (OECD definition). The definition of average worker was introduced in the Taxing Wages 2005 and replaced the term "average production worker".

The results for six European countries are shown in Table 3.1 and demonstrate different levels of cash public support to families with children for the years from 1985 to 2014. Spain has one of the least generous system to support children in the EU country (Levy, Lietz & Sutherland, 2007). In Spain, most of the public transfers to families with children are channeled by the tax system, child benefit is conditioned on employment status and is means-tested, while recent reforms have reinforced this structure through promoting the tax concessions. Hence, there is a slight reduction in the cost of the existing income-tested benefits (Figari, 2010). Most generous cash benefits are provided by the Czech Republic and Germany, where families (with children) substantially benefit from public support in term of cash transfers and various forms of tax breaks. The result of a recent study confirms this finding (Van Lancker, Ghysels, & Cantillon, 2015). By contrast, in the Nordic countries, the cash benefits to families in terms of family allowance payment or tax relief are low. Previous research indicated that Scandinavian countries make less use of the monetary transfers to support families and dependent individuals, and instead they rely heavily on service provision (Pavolini & Ranci, 2008). In addition, this may be also related to the trend of individualization or defamilisation in Scandinavian countries characterized by individualized rights and taxation, which aim to facilitate the dual-earner, care-sharing family model. It is noteworthy that France strongly differs from Germany with regards to the provision of cash and tax benefits. Along with the Nordic countries, France has continued to reform its family policies and enhance the childcare provision in order to promote the family/work balance (Fagnani, 2012). In the UK, a child tax credit and a working tax credit replaced the family credit and the child complements in income support/jobseeker's allowance in 2003 (Levy, Lietz, & Sutherland 2007). The new scheme is the first in-work benefit for childless people who work 30 or more hours per week (16 or more if there are children at home) (Figari, 2010). As can be seen in Table 3.1, this income gap between single childless people and two-parent-two-child family declined greatly from 2001 to 2014 in the UK.

Second, the paid parenting leave FTE (full-time employment) rate shows the level of benefits provided by states that allow parents to care for their young children at home with public supports. Considering that replacement rates and length of parenting leaves vary across countries and types of leave, entitlements to parents are shown in the form of FTE. Following Engster and Stensöta (2011), the FTE only includes the paid parenting leaves with over 50% replacement rate. The parenting leaves refer to leaves used by parents prior to childbirth and during the first years of their

children's life. The full-equivalency rate is computed by multiplying the duration of guaranteed parental leave (in weeks) with the income reimbursement level (as per cent).

Table 3.2: Rate of paid parenting leave in the six European countries, between 1985 and 2014

	1985	1996	2001	2006	2014
Spain	10.5	16	16	16	18.1
Czech Republic	23.4	19.3	19.6	19.6	19.6
Germany	14	14	14	14	46.2
France	14.4	13.4	16	16	18
Sweden	27.7	42.9	41.2	41.2	45.9
UK	6.1	8.1	5.6	5.4	7.2

Source: Data from 1985 to 2006 are drawn from the Comparative Maternity, Parental, and Childcare Leave and Benefits Databases, Version 3 (Gauthier, 2010). Data for 2014 is drawn from International Review of Leave Policies and Research (Moss, 2014).

The generosity and length of maternity and parental leaves vary across European countries (see Table 3.2). In Spain and France, the maternity leave has high income replacement rates, and the length of paid parental leave is quite long but with low income replacement rates or flat-rate payments. Entitlement to more extensive parental leave but at low income replacement rates may encourage mothers to leave the labor market and to return home for taking care of their children (Evertsson & Duvander, 2011). The highly-paid parental leaves are most generous and longest in Sweden from 1985 to 2006. It is noteworthy that Germany enacted a radical new parenting leave scheme in 2007, which offers a 67% replacement rate of previous labor earnings (from employment or self-employment) for either mother or father for up to 12 months after birth. Furthermore, if both father and mother used at least two months of parental leave, they can receive an extra 2 months and the resulting in a total of 14 available months of payment. Hence, Germany had the highest rate of paid parental leave in 2014. In the Czech Republic[8], the length of paid maternity leave is long (28 weeks), but the income replacement rates for maternity leave are relatively low compared to other nations (70% of average gross salary). The UK has the longest statutory maternity leave, which has been increased from 14 weeks to 52 weeks (Baird & O'Brien,

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[8] The new paternity leave has come into effect in the Czech Republic on February 2018, which entitles fathers to claim up to 70% of their salary for seven days of leave.

2015). The statutory maternity leave is paid for up to 39 weeks: the first 6 weeks are paid at 90% income replacement and then £145.18 or 90% of average gross weekly earnings (if that is lower) for the remaining 33 weeks. Moreover, a new leave provision named Shared Parental Leave allows mothers to transfer leave to partners after 20 weeks, but the designated flat weekly rate of £138 constrains the father's use of leave.

Third, the public provision of childcare services and pre-primary education allows parents, especially mothers, to return to work after parental leave and to reconcile employment and care, which have an essential impact on structuring gender, economic, and family relationships. Moreover, the improvements in the generosity and accessibility of public childcare services may destroy the traditional family values and encourage nontraditional family forms. Public support for early childhood education and care covers all public financial expenditures (in cash or in-kind) on formal childcare services (e.g. day-care centers, family day care, aimed at children under 3 years) and pre-primary education services (e.g. kindergartens, aimed at children aged from 3 to 5). The indicator is measured by using public expenditure on childcare and formal day-care services and expenditure on pre-primary education services, as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Table 3.3: Public expenditure on childcare and pre-school, as a percentage of GDP and by country

	1985	1996	2001	2006	2013*
Spain	0.02	0.01	0.4	0.4	0.5
Czech Republic	n.	0	0.3	0.3	0.5
Germany	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.6
France	0.2	0.7	1.2	1.1	1.3
Sweden	1.7	1.5	1.0	1.3	1.6
UK	n.	0	0.7	0.8	0.8

Note: *n.* means data not available. *The latest data available are 2013.
Source: OECD Database, *Public spending on childcare and early education*.

As shown in Table 3.3, although public expenditure on childcare and pre-school lagged behind in Spain, Germany, and the UK, these countries have made efforts to improve this situation between 1985 and 2013. The most generous provision with regards to childcare services and pre-school

education are found in France (1.3%) and Sweden (1.6%). In France, public spending committed to childcare services increased substantially, from 0.2 per cent of GDP in 1985 to 1.3 per cent of GDP in 2013. Since the late 1980s, dramatic changes in French family policy have occurred and public expenditure related to childcare provision has been enhanced steadily and greatly (Fagnani & Math, 2008). Children at a very young age have greater access to public childcare services and preschool education. In parallel, more flexible and individualized care services have been available. Parents who employ family carers/nannies at their own home are eligible to deduct a certain proportion of the cost of childcare from their taxable earnings (Thévenon, 2009). Therefore, France, along with the Nordic countries, leads the European countries in public childcare services. The Czech Republic spends the lowest expenditure on formal childcare institutions and provides little public subsidized childcare services.

In sum, Spain and the UK provide the lowest state support concerning family policy. Although there has been a rise in all forms of family-related benefits, including cash benefits, paid parental leaves and fiscal expenditure on formal childcare services and pre-primary education, they still lagged far behind other European countries. Therefore, considering the limited state supports to family with children and the strong familialism, Spanish family still acts as the main provider of care and protection. Sweden clearly stands apart from all other countries with the highest levels of support for families. Owing to the introduction of an earnings-related parental leave scheme in 2007 and a legal claim to childcare for children aged one or more in 2013, family policy in Germany has greatly developed. Nevertheless, the recent adjustments in family policy are ambiguous and may lead to two negative outcomes: first, mothers with insecure employment situation are more likely to withdraw from the labor market for a long period; second, the access to early childhood education and care facilities becomes more limited for disadvantaged children (Thévenon, Adema, & Ali, 2014). In France, the well-developed system of childcare services now leads the EU countries in childcare provision and benefits (Fagnani, 2012). The increasing concerns on issues such as gender equality, employment and child poverty have reshaped the content of family policies aimed at improving the work/family life balance along with a steady rise in the spending on childcare provision (Fagnani & Math, 2008). In the Czech Republic, family policy is gradually moving from a "mixed profile" of both conservative and universalist regime to a liberal regime (Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2009). Nevertheless, the historical legacy of universalism in the communist times preserves its influence on recent policies. The post-communist government

has kept the well-paid maternity leave and extended the length of parental leaves (with a low flat-rate benefit). Moreover, the provision of public pre-primary education (for preschoolers aged 3-5) sustain a high level (Pascall & Kwak, 2010), but the budget cutbacks in expenditure on public childcare services are leading to a considerable drop in the number of childcare facilities for children under three (Saxonberg & Sirovátka, 2009).

3.2.3 The role of family policy in the prevalence of cohabitation

Family policies have effects on family behaviors (Carlson et al., 2004), such as encouraging some types of union status over others (Gauthier, 2007), increasing fertility (Kalwij, 2010), and diminishing single mothers' expectations of marriage (Mincy & Dupree, 2001; Murray, 2001; Lichter, Batson, & Brown, 2004). There are at least three possible mechanisms underpinning the relationship between family policy and individuals' living arrangements. First, family policy plays a crucial role in the diffusion of cohabitation by fueling the individualization of partnering and parenting decision. Generous and universalized family policies alleviate people's reliance on kinship relations for support in terms of economic security and childcare (Lappegård, Klüsener, & Vignoli, 2014) so that they become more individualized and more liberated from requirements imposed on them by families (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Second, family policies enhance female employment opportunities and independence and therefore they improve the capability to form an autonomous household (Esping-Andersen, 1999; Thévenon, 2011). In addition, family policy offers financial subsidies and universalized services to encourage mothers' continuous labor market activity after giving birth (Stier, Lewin-Epstein, & Braun, 2001). As a result, the growth of women's economic independence reduces their desirability of getting married in that the gains obtained from marriage are decreasing (Becker, 1981; Lichter, McLaughlin, & Ribar, 2002). From the perspective of men's economic status, family policy has done little to improve their employment prospects (Mincy & Dupree, 2001). Meanwhile, the threshold of being a "marriageable" man has been elevated along with the growth of women's economic positions. Hence, cohabitation becomes a good solution to economic uncertainty and insecurity (Kiernan, 2004). Third, family policy has increased women's participation in the labor force and men's involvement in childcare and housework. Changes in the gender division of labor in household weaken the social norms attached to marriage and contribute to the deinstitutionalization of

marriage (Cherlin, 2004). As a result, the cultural, religious and social meanings attached to marriage are not as important as they used to be and, in contrast, more weight is put on individuals' preferences on union status (Gennetian & Knox, 2003).

In addition to the previous three mechanisms, people may choose cohabitation over marriage because of the eligibility of some benefits, such as financial subsidies for single mothers. When single mothers are cohabiting with a partner who is not the father of the children (who are benefit recipients), they can benefit from economies of scale in household expenses and two incomes (if they pool income together) like married spouses, and from allowances or services granted exclusively to single-parent families (Moffitt et al., 1998). Therefore, family welfare benefits may unexpectedly have economic effects on parents' decisions regarding their union status. Concerning the growth of the diversification of family formation patterns and the development of family welfare policies, it is essential to get knowledge about the correlations between individuals' living arrangements and the generosity of family policy across countries.

3.3 Legal harmonization between cohabitation and marriage

The legal boundary between marriage and cohabitation has become increasingly ambiguous in many Western countries. Historically, unmarried cohabitation was regarded as criminal in some countries, for instance, in Italy until 1968, in parts of Germany until 1970 or in Norway until 1972 (Bradley, 2001). In the past decades, cohabitation has gradually grown from a deviant and rare behavior to a widespread form of partnership with high social acceptance. Accordingly, more countries have enacted legislation reflecting changes in partnership behavior. Cohabiting couples have been granted some legal rights and responsibilities to each other and also to their children born outside marriage. It has been suggested that the association between laws and union formation is complicated and reciprocal (Perelli-Harris & Sánchez Gassen, 2012). Countries have been enacting legal regulations and laws in response to the growing prevalence of cohabitation and childbearing within cohabitation. Conversely, these laws and regulations may shape individuals' union formation and affect their decisions on union status.

3.3.1 Legal regulations on cohabiting partnership and parenthood in Europe

Legal responses to the emergence of cohabitation and childbearing within cohabitation also vary across European countries. The improvements in the legal position of children born outside of marriage have been converging in Europe, and thus entitlements for children of cohabiting couples and for those of married parents are now identical (Kiernan, 2004). However, laws and policies display a great diversity in rights and responsibilities between cohabitors and married couples across nations, such as in tax system, social security, financial maintenance, paternity and so on.

Pregnancy and the birth of children are key determinants to people's living arrangements. Couples used to get married when they decided to have children, in part because they wanted to protect children from the legal and social disadvantages attached to their "illegitimate" status (Maldonado, 2011). In the past decades, the legal position of children born outside of wedlock has been greatly improved despite the fact that the speed and the extent of law reform vary across European countries. Considering the dramatic growth in the number of children born to cohabiting parents, it is important to know the relevant legal regulations on parent-child relationship.

In European jurisdictions, the leading principle in laws has moved away from being "parent-centric" towards being "child-centric", which puts a great emphasis on the "best interest of the child" (Scherpe, 2016). Historically, children born outside marriage suffered significant legal discrimination, in the sense that they had no right to inherit from their parents and they had no right to parental support. Reforms in laws that regulate the relationship between parents and children primarily concentrated on children's rights to inherit from their father and gradually expanded to grant mothers and fathers parental rights and responsibilities (Perelli-Harris & Sánchez Gassen, 2012). On the one hand, children born within and outside of marriage have been granted equal rights to inherit from their fathers in most European countries. Even though the process was slow, and the timing of this reform differed across nations[9], the harmonization of the inheritance rights of children born within and outside marriage was achieved in most parts of Europe by the late 1990s (Perelli-Harris & Sánchez Gassen, 2012). On the other hand, cohabiting (or unmarried) fathers are not automatically granted parental rights over children. In all European Union nations, married mothers and fathers immediately obtain parental rights and responsibilities

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[9] For instance, the inheritance right was granted to non-marital children in Norway in 1916 (Eekelaar & Katz, 1980), while children born out of marriage did not get the equal rights as their married counterparts until the late 1990s in Germany.

when the child is born (Kiernan, 2004; Dey & Wasoff, 2006). Until recently all cohabiting (or unmarried) mothers have been granted the same rights and responsibilities towards their children as married mothers. However, the legal status, rights and obligations of cohabiting fathers are quite different from their married counterparts across countries and over time. Cohabiting (or unmarried) fathers need to take steps to establish the paternity of the child and they have the financial obligation to maintain their children once the paternity has been established. Although cohabiting fathers' parenthood rights have been extended through the introduction of the joint custody (Ostner, 2002; Barlow et al., 2005), they still cannot automatically acquire parental rights over their children (Barlow, 2004; Perelli-Harris & Sánchez Gassen, 2012), whether they are cohabiting with the mother or not.

In Europe, marriage between a man and a woman was widely considered the only legally recognized form of partnership until Sweden extended some marriage-like rights to cohabitors through the introduction of the Cohabitees (Joint Homes) Act in 1987 (Barlow, 2004). Although unmarried cohabitation has been legally recognized by most European countries, there exists a great variation with regards to cohabiting couples' rights and duties to each other across nations. First, several legislatures (such as in the Nordic countries) have made considerable efforts to harmonize the laws on marriage and cohabitation (Eriksen, 2001). More recently, these countries have decided to go for "full equality" through opening up marriage and abolishing the registered partnership regimes (Scherpe, 2016). Sweden is a pioneer in regulating the relationships between unmarried heterosexual couples who are living in "marriage-like" relationships by the introduction of the Cohabitees (Joint) Homes Act in 1987. The general principle underpinning laws and policies emphasizes on individual's preference, and equality between men and women. For instance, income tax is declared separately by each person irrespective of their marital status, and the entitlements to social security are universal (Björnberg, 2001). Hence, there is little difference between cohabitation and marriage in the taxation system and social security because partners are treated as independent individuals.

Second, "the new style couple regulation" features registered partnership (Barlow, 2004). This kind of model mirrors marriage in terms of obligations and rights, but there is more freedom to exit the relationship. For instance, France, the Netherlands and some autonomous communities in Spain (for example, Catalonia, Aragon and Navarra) have introduced the registered partnership for both heterosexual and homosexual couples, which is different from the Scandinavian model

(where the registered partnership is only available to same-sex partners) (Pintens, 2003). The registered partnership is an alternative to marriage for opposite-sex couples because they can choose whether to formally register their relationship with public authorities or to continue living in an unregistered union. The degree of protection to the registered partners situates somewhere between marriage and informal cohabitation. As stated by Scherpe (2016, p.49), "… [the registered partnership] created another tier of family law rule situated beneath the 'role model' of marriage…". In France, the PACS (Pacte Civil de solidarité, the French registered partnership) was introduced in 1999 (Martin & Théry, 2001), which has consolidated and extended marriage-like rights for cohabiting couples. Couples in the registered partnership are considered as a unit for taxation (after a qualifying period, Bradley, 2001) and most of the social security benefits in France (Barlow, 2004). However, they cannot claim financial compensation after dissolution and have no rights of mutual inheritance and adoption (Bradley, 2001). The combination of legally recognized partnership as well as certain protections and rights, and a simpler procedure of dissolution (Godard, 2007) encourages an increasing number of people to use this living arrangement.

In Spain, there is no law on unmarried cohabitation applicable at state level (Jones & Merino-Blanco, 2008), but eleven out of the seventeen (in total) autonomous communities have passed regional laws to regulate cohabitation through extending certain rights of married people to cohabitors. In 1998, Catalonia enacted the first regional partnership law to regulate the relationship between cohabiting couples and their rights. During the period from 1999 to 2003, unmarried cohabitation (for both different-sex and same-sex couples) has been recognized as an institution by laws in the other ten autonomous communities (Ruiz, 2006). Furthermore, there are two approaches for the eleven autonomous communities to regulate cohabitation (detailed information in Spain will be discussed in Chapter 5). First, for those autonomous communities with traditionalregulations on civil law (foral law) (Aragón, Baleares, the Basque Country, Catalonia and Navarra), there is an established framework regarding rights and duties for unmarried cohabitors (Ruiz, 2006), which includes the financial rights and obligations during cohabitation, the rights after dissolution or one partner's death (Jones & Merino-Blanco, 2008). Second, for those autonomous communities without such regulations (Andalucía, Asturias, Canarias, Extremadura, Madrid and Valencia), the legal regulations on cohabitation are rather brief and limited (Ruiz, 2006). As a result, the absence of a coherent law at the state level has led to a diversity in rights and obligations for unmarried cohabitors in different autonomous communities.

Third, some legislatures reinforce the preference for traditional marriage by promoting marriage rather than extending rights to unmarried cohabitation. In Germany, there is no regulation on unmarried cohabitation, marriage being the only legally recognized form of partnership for heterosexual couples (Henneck, 2003; Jones & Merino-Blanco, 2008). Protections and rights provided by the Federal Constitution are reserved to married couples, such as the joint-filing system of taxation, the coverage of a non-employed partner in the public health insurance, succession rights, and the payment of maintenance and alimony after dissolution (Barg & Beblo, 2009; Jones & Merino-Blanco, 2008). As a result, marriage is privileged above unmarried cohabitation in Germany. Likewise, unmarried cohabitation has received no statutory recognition in Switzerland (Schwenzer & Keller, 2016). Basically, cohabitors are taken as two individuals instead of a unit and have no such legal rights and obligations as married couples. Moreover, the Civil Code and related legislations cannot be applied to unmarried cohabitation (Graham-Siegenthaler, 1998). Hence, those non-employed cohabiting partners (usually women) remain unprotected especially when they separate from their partners.

In the Czech Republic, there is neither a legal recognition of unmarried heterosexual cohabitation nor a catalogue of rights and obligations of cohabitors in laws (Králíčková, 2008). During the communist period, unmarried cohabitation used to be exclusively adopted by older couples (widowed or divorced). From the economic perspective, older couples chose unmarried cohabitation to retain the rights of widow pensions, and young people preferred marriage in order to obtain assigning flats by the state. Until more recently, the legal reaction to the growth of unmarried cohabitation remains inactive. Except for the obligations to economically support their children born outside marriage, cohabiting couples do not enjoy the legal entitlements to each other, such as the duty to maintain, right to inherit, and community property, etc. (Hrušáková & Westphalova, 2011).

Fourth, the common law jurisdictions of England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland have not taken a unified approach in their legal recognition of unmarried cohabitation (Barlow, 2014). In England and Wales, heterosexual cohabitation continues to be regarded as a threat to legal marriage and family life. There is no specific legal status for heterosexual cohabitors, and the civil partnership is limited to same-sex partners. Moreover, cohabitors are regarded as inferior to married couples in terms of legal rights. In case of relationship breakdown, financial remedies are only provided for the benefit of the child, while the protections to cohabiting couples are limited.

Scotland has legislated to provide cohabitors a legal status and presumptive rights and remedies on relationship dissolution and death of a partner (Barlow, 2014). Scotland has reformed the law relating to cohabitation marked by the implementation of The Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006, focusing on redressing economic disadvantage suffered by cohabitors rather than entitlements to relationship property.

In sum, with the growing number of children born in cohabiting families, legal regulations in almost all European countries have tried to protect the children's well-being by securing enough child material maintenance from fathers (Perelli-Harris & Sánchez Gassen, 2012). However, legal responses to the relationship between unmarried cohabiting couples vary across countries. The diversity in the diffusion of cohabitation may be associated with legal rights and duties of cohabitors in different countries.

3.3.2 Cross-national differences in legal rights and obligations between cohabitation and marriage

Previous research has examined the national-level legislation and policies regarding cohabitation and marriage and has created a framework to measure the legal differences between cohabiting and married couples (Waaldijk, 2005; Perelli-Harris & Sánchez Gassen, 2012). Following these studies, laws and policies on cohabitation and marriage are organized into five clusters: 1) rights and benefits during relationship; 2) the protection of the surviving partner; 3) the property disputes after union dissolution; 4) father-child relationship; and 5) rights for special groups. This examination only includes the legal rights and obligations with regards to heterosexual couples.

Table 3.4 shows whether and to what extent are married and cohabiting couples treated differently in terms of legal rights and obligations during the relationship, after union dissolution and a partner's death, and the legal child-parent relationship in each country. It is noteworthy that the legislation in Spain is passed on the regional level. Therefore, there is no law at the state level regulating the rights and obligations of unmarried cohabiting couples. Likewise, although the UK is a sovereign state, England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland have distinct family law jurisdictions, and thereby legal regulations on cohabitation are partially different. As stated above, the level of the legal recognition of opposite-sex cohabitors in England and Wales is lower than their counterparts in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Following the study of Perelli-Harris and

Sánchez Gassen (2012), the legal regulations in England and Wales are applied. At the bottom line of Table 3.4 it is possible to find a summary of an overall degree of legal harmonization of cohabitation and marriage in each nation.

Table 3.4: Differences between married and cohabiting couples in their legal status by country

	Spain	Czech Republic	France		Germany	Sweden	England and Wales
			informal	register			
Income tax	1	1	1	0	2	0	0
Health insurance	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Inheritance rights	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
Inheritance tax	2	2	2	0	2	0	2
Survivor's pension	1	2	2	2	2	1	2
Resident apartment	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Assets	2	2	2	1	2	1	2
Alimony	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
Debts	2	1	2	0	2	0	0
Paternity	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Residence permit	1	2	1	1	2	0	0
Citizenship	2	2	2	2	2	0	2
Total	16	18	17	10	20	6	12

Note: Different values demonstrate the diversity between married and cohabiting couples in terms of legal rights and obligations in the six European countries. 2 indicates that no marital rights are granted to cohabiting couples; 1 indicates that less difference of rights between married and cohabiting couples; 0 indicates that equal rights are granted to married and cohabiting couples.
Source: France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Spain, England and Wales: Perelli-Harris, B., and Gassen, N. S. (2012). How similar are cohabitation and marriage? Legal approaches to cohabitation across Western Europe; the Czech Republic: own analyses based on legal documents and secondary sources.

None of the six countries has achieved complete legal harmonization between cohabitation and marriage. In Spain, the situation of cohabitors is described as "chaotic" due to the lack of a coherent law at the state level and the different laws in the autonomous communities (Jones & Merino-Blanco, 2008). Some autonomous communities have enacted the registered partnership to give cohabitors adequate protections due to the inactive reaction of the legislature at the national level to the growing prevalence of cohabitation (Asua González, 2014). Only spouses can declare income taxes jointly, but cohabitors can obtain certain tax deductions through forming a tax

community with joint children. The public health insurance has been extended to unmarried partners who are living with insured individuals in a relationship analogous to the conjugal relationship. However, cohabitors do not automatically obtain the right to inherit. They are entitled to inherit their partner's estate only if specified in a will or an inheritance agreement (Asua González, 2014). The Law on Divorce extends the right of claiming the survivor's pension to unmarried couples only if certain conditions are met. The Act on House Rental recognizes the right to retain the family home in cases of union separation or death of one partner both to married spouses and to unmarried cohabitors who had been cohabiting as if they were married for at least two years (Blanca Rodríguez, 2004). The property disputes are resolved by referring to general property law and greatly differ from married spouses. Moreover, unmarried fathers cannot automatically obtain parental rights as married fathers, extra steps should be taken to establish paternity.

The sum total is lowest in Sweden (6 points), indicating that Sweden has moved furthest in equalizing rights and obligations for cohabitors and married couples in most legal dimensions, but still maintain some rights for married people. In the principle of gender equality, Sweden consistently stresses on extending individual rights and autonomy. Separate taxation system was introduced in 1971 and social security such as health insurance covers the entire population (Rothstein, 2001; Bergh, 2004). Moreover, legislation in Sweden is neutral to different living arrangements on the basis of the idea that partnership is a pattern of voluntary coexistence between two independent individuals (Ahlberg, Roman, & Duncan, 2008). Given that the social unit has been gradually changing from households to individuals, the legal recognition of unmarried cohabitation is more equivalent to marriage in Sweden.

France implemented registered cohabitation (Pacs) to grant both homosexual and heterosexual couples legal rights and obligations, and couples in registered and unregistered partnership are regulated differently. Pacs mainly regulates the relationship between couples rather than between children and parents. Registered partners have attained a legal status that is more equal to married couples than their unregistered counterparts, including income tax, inheritance rights and tax, division of assets after union dissolution, and responsibility for household debts. For instance, Pacs partners obtain the right to file joint income tax returns in the same manner as married spouses. Moreover, considering that divorce is usually time consuming and more expensive, it is easier for registered partners to dissolve their unions and have no or fewer financial obligations to their

partners after separation. However, it seems that France is reluctant to provide legal regulations to unregistered cohabitation. Thus, for unregistered partnerships, the Napoleonic adage, "Cohabitants ignore the law, so the law ignores them", is a fair summary of the legal attitudes toward unregistered cohabitors in France.

The Czech Republic and Germany have the highest overall values, 18 and 20 points separately. Traditional views on marriage are still strongly privileged, and most of the legal rights and obligations of married couples have not been granted to cohabiting couples in these countries. In particular, legal marriage is favored in German taxation system and social security. Joint taxation and co-insurance are restricted to married couples. However, in the Czech Republic, the joint taxation was introduced in 2005, but this filing status was abolished with the introduction of a flat tax in 2008 (Kalíšková, 2013). Although cohabiting couples cannot claim the spousal tax credit, they are eligible to claim a child tax credit. The Czech health security system is composed of a social insurance system and a universal medical benefit system. All persons permanently residing in the Czech Republic are entitled to universal medical benefits (Aspalter, Jinsoo, & Sojeung, 2009). The entitlement to inheritance, preferential inheritance tax rates, and survivor's pension are only granted to married spouses in Germany and the Czech Republic. Unregistered cohabitors have no right to alimony after partnership dissolution. However, if children are involved, the primary childcare provider is entitled to financial maintenance irrespective of their marital status before separation in Germany (Wörz, 2011). Finally, cohabiting couples are treated as unrelated persons when they apply for a resident permit or citizenship.

In England and Wales, cohabitors have no specific legal rights and obligations, and cannot "opt in" to civil partnerships. The tax system and public health insurance in England and Wales are individualized, irrespective of couple's union is marriage or cohabitation. When one partner dies without leaving a will, the survivor has no automatic right under the intestacy rules to inherit the property of the deceased. In March 2013, the previous government announced the rejection of the Law Commission's recommendations regarding rights for cohabitors upon intestacy (Fairbairn, 2017). Unmarried couples have no rights to ownership of each other's property on partnership dissolution and the length of time during which the partners have cohabited is not relevant. Moreover, couples living together as husband and wife are treated in the same way as married spouses for succession to the tenancy (Wilson, 2009).

Finally, parenthood related rights and responsibilities have been gradually opened up to cohabiting fathers in most countries, even though legal harmonization between cohabitation and marriage varies across countries. Cohabiting (or unmarried) fathers have assumed the obligations to financially support their biological children, and the rights of cohabiting and married fathers are the same once paternity is confirmed. Mothers and fathers who were married to the mother at the time of the child's birth are automatically rewarded the same rights and duties (Kiernan, 2004). However, cohabiting fathers are able to obtain parental rights responsibilities after the establishment of paternity in all the studied countries. Moreover, procedures of establishing paternity substantially vary across nations. In Spain, according to the Article 120 of the Civil Code, the establishment of paternity of unmarried fathers is determined by: 1) recognition before the officer in charge of the Civil Registry; 2) resolution issued in proceedings processed in accordance with the legislation of the Civil Registry; 3) final court order; 4) with respect of the mother, where maternal filiation should be provided in the registration of birth performed within the requisite period, in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Registry Law. In Sweden, the establishment of paternity for unmarried fathers should be not only approved by the mother of the child but also the by the Social Welfare Committee. In England and Wales, paternity should be acknowledged by both parents (or the court), and the primary method is by having father's name registered or re-registered on the birth certificate. In Germany, the acknowledgement of paternity requires the mother's consent (Browne-Barbour, 2015).

3.3.3 The role of laws in the prevalence of cohabitation

As the prevalence of cohabitation varies greatly across European countries, accordingly legal responses to the spread of cohabitation differ as well. Disparities in the legal recognition of unmarried cohabitors may affect couples' decisions on their living arrangements. Specifically, the growth of the harmonization in legal rights and responsibilities may encourage the rise of cohabitation, and vice versa, a significant diversity in the legal treatments between married and cohabiting couples may prevent cohabitation from becoming a normative living arrangement.

Cohabiting couples used to marry in order to legitimate the birth of their child (Manning & Landale, 1996) and obtain parental rights over their children (especially for fathers). Even more, some couples got married in anticipation of conceiving a child in order to obtain the financial

benefits that accrue to married children (Brown, 2004). Historical studies show that most of cohabtitors decided to get married for their children (Manning, 1993). Nevertheless, reforms of laws regarding the relationship between parents and children have extended the rights and obligations of unmarried parents over their children throughout Europe. Moreover, discrimination against children born outside of wedlock has been banned from law, which fuels the process of separating marriage and parenthood (Daly & Scheiwe, 2010). As a result, the weakening role of marriage as a legal and social institution for childbearing and childrearing may prompt the prevalence of cohabitation.

Laws can reinforce people's preference of marriage over cohabitation or motivate couples to marry through financial incentives and disincentives (Martin & Théry, 2001; Perelli-Harris & Sánchez Gasson, 2012). Some countries (for example, Germany, Switzerland) continue to draw a strict line between marriage and heterosexual cohabitation by giving married couples a privilege of the generous joint taxation and the public insurance coverage and pension regulations (Eriksen, 2001; Daly & Scheiwe, 2010). On the one hand, only married couples are entitled to file joint income tax returns, which provide very beneficial tax outcomes when spouses earn differently or one of the partners has a part-time or no job. Hence, this taxation offers direct financial incentives for couples to marry in order to minimize income taxes. On the other hand, cohabiting couples may benefit from certain allowances if they have children or they qualify for other requirements. However, it is worth noting that some governments have also removed fiscal advantages of cohabiting parents (Martin & Théry, 2001). Take France for example, the rise in marriage in 1996-1997 has been identified as a consequence of the change in tax law that cohabitors are no longer able to claim the supplementary tax deduction granted for non-married parents in 1995. Certainly, when both partners are full-time employed and have a same level of income, the advantages of the joint-filing in the income tax system are minor. In addition, only married couples can be co-insured in the public insurance (Barg & Beblo, 2009). Most of the European countries have introduced a universalized social security system by entitling social insurance to individuals, whereas, in some cases (Germany, for instance) the public health insurance of one partner can only cover his/her married spouse who is not in the labor market. As a consequence, tax system and social security can support certain living arrangements through financial incentives to decisions for or against a particular type of union status.

Finally, it is also possible that differences in legal positions between cohabitation and marriage do not matter to individuals' union formation. The "common law marriage myth", whereby cohabitors falsely believe that they have the same legal rights as married couples (Barlow et al., 2008), may mislead couples into choosing unmarried cohabitation without realizing the vulnerability of this union status. Moreover, even though some cohabitors are aware of their vulnerable legal position, very few take action to protect themselves (Barlow et al., 2008). Some couples move in together even without realizing that they are cohabiting (Hixson, 2008). Hence, further empirical studies are needed to understand the correlation between individuals' living arrangements and the legal harmonization between marriage and cohabitation.

Chapter 4 Theoretical framework: Parental union status and economic well-being of children

4.1 Introduction

Over the past decades, family behavior has undergone profound transformations. Accordingly, the living arrangements of children have become more complex. A growing share of children are born out-of-wedlock. In Europe, approximately 40% of live births (the EU-28 average) were born outside marriage in 2012 (39% in Spain; 34.5% in Germany; 43.4% in the Czech Republic; 47.6% in the UK; 54.5% in Sweden; and 56.7% in France). Moreover, empirical research shows that the substantial rise in the proportions of non-marital births is in fact attributable to cohabiting couples rather than single mothers (Kiernan, 2004; Kennedy & Bumpass, 2008). In Spain, for instance, non-marital births have substantially increased, from 29.9% in 2007 to 42.3% in 2014, and nearly three quarters of all unmarried births are attributable to cohabiting mothers rather than single mothers (INE). As a result, children are more likely to experience parental cohabitation than ever before and spend increasing proportions of their lives in cohabiting-parent families. The dramatic changes in children's living arrangements have attracted the attention of scholars and policy makers, and concerns are raised towards the well-being of children in different living arrangements.

To explore whether and how does children's economic well-being vary by their living arrangements in Spain, this chapter reviews the theories and literature regarding the correlation between union status and child well-being by focusing on the following questions: what is child poverty and how to measure it? Why does the issue of child poverty deserve special attention? Are children living in cohabiting-parent families worse off than those living with married parents? What are the theoretical explanations and mechanisms underlying the association between child wellbeing and parents' union status patterns?

4.2 Child poverty: Definition and measures

Children are the future of our society and child well-being is a key component of a society's overall welfare. Living in poverty is detrimental to children's health status and academic performance.

More importantly, the influences of poverty on children are not short term, but unfortunately, they can last during a lifetime and are eventually transmitted to future generations. Furthermore, children growing up in poverty have less access to high-quality education and thus obtain fewer capabilities that enable them to work out of poverty, and in turn they are less likely to contribute to society. Hence, child poverty matters not only the well-being of children and families but also the overall well-being of our society. During recent decades, the issue of child poverty has been increasingly gaining momentum and tackling child poverty has become one of the top targets on the political agenda in developed countries. In order to adopt policies which can effectively reduce child poverty, it is important to have a clear idea at what we are aiming, that is, which sections of the population can be identified as the poor children in a given society?

4.2.1 Definition of child poverty

There has been much debate regarding the definition of poverty (e.g. Ringen, 1988; Atkinson, 1989; Citro & Michael, 1995; Atkinson & Bourguignon, 2000; Atkinson et al., 2002), but no single definition can obtain a universal agreement. Poverty can be identified as either an uni-dimensional or a multi-dimensional concept. In addition to the conventional view of poverty as "an unacceptably low standard of living" (Olowa, 2012), it is also used to describe a range of adverse situations such as a low level of consumption and expenditure (Blackwood & Lynch, 1994) and a lack of access to education, healthcare and other basic services (Bradbury, Jenkins, & Micklewright, 2001).

Child poverty is usually conceived as poverty experienced by children aged under 18 years, sometimes including young people who economically depend on their parents. The causes of child poverty differ from the poverty of adults, and the consequences of child poverty may be lifelong for children and in turn even have a serious impact on the development of society. Similarly, as with the definition of poverty, there has been considerable debate over the definition of child poverty as well (see Minujin et al., 2006).

The monetary approach is the most widely used way to define and measure child poverty, directly based on household income or indirectly based on consumption. For children, not only the level of living conditions but also their social integration depends on their parents' economic resources. Parents with access to low levels of economic resources are more likely to be excluded

from the mainstream of social activities, which in turn exclude their children (Bradbury & Jäntti, 1999). It is true that poverty is more than just money but money matters. Household income is closely related to the resources and living standard of children. Hence, children are defined as poor when their household income is below a certain threshold. Some researchers argued that consumption is a more appropriate way to define child poverty (Bradbury & Jäntti, 1999) in that household income can convert into two parts: consumption and savings/investments. One the one hand, household dissaving can help children get out of poverty when facing a sudden loss of income or financial difficulties. Therefore, children's living standards may maintain unchanged despite the decline in household income. On the other hand, the more parents save, the less they will devote income to consumption (Bradbury & Jäntti, 1999). Children's living standards depend on parents' expenditure on food, services, health care, and other purchases, which are constrained by household saving patterns. It is possible that parents reduce the current consumption in order to save for their retirement and, thus, the reduction in purchases of goods and services due to parents' saving pattern may reduce children's living standards. However, it is possible that children do not necessarily benefit proportionately from the income or consumption of their household. As addressed by UNICEF (2005), "expanding the definition of child poverty beyond traditional conceptualizations, such as low household income or low levels of consumption, is particularly important". Therefore, the monetary approach is not enough to define child poverty and more comprehensive strategies are required to identify the various features of this phenomenon.

Some apply the human rights concept as one approach defining child poverty. The human rights-based approach of poverty definition concentrates on fundamental rights, without which people can be seen as poor. On the basis of this approach, the working definition of child poverty of UNICEF (2005) emphasizes the deprivation concerning a set of material and social supports, namely,

"Children living in poverty [are those who] experience deprivation of the material, spiritual and emotional resources needed to survive, develop and thrive, leaving them unable to enjoy their rights, achieve their full potential or participate as full and equal members of society."

This definition focuses on different dimensions of child poverty and suggests that these dimensions are interrelated. In addition to the financial resources, material deprivation and social exclusion are also essential to the definition of child poverty. Moreover, it indicates that child poverty may

have a lifelong consequence. It is the responsibility of governments to reduce and eliminate child poverty, which is neither charity nor moral obligation but the human rights to which poor children are entitled.

Except for the definition of UNICEF, other international and regional organizations, such as the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) and the Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Center, also endeavour to provide a multi-faceted definition of child poverty in order to guide social policies to confront this issue (Minujin et al., 2006). One report of the Christian Children's Fund (Feeny & Boyden, 2004) adopted the poverty definition from Kanbur and Squire (2001, p3) that "poverty is the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions" and raised two crucial points regarding child poverty. First, the definition of child poverty varies across societies and time; and second, child poverty "is conceived in terms of the ability to purchase goods and services (money) or their ownership (material possessions)" (Feeny & Boyden 2004, p7). Thus, the CCF report suggests that a single monetary approach is inappropriate to identify child poverty, and it should be considered as a multi-dimensional phenomenon. In addition, the CCF developed a three-dimension framework to conceptualize child poverty, namely, deprivation, exclusion, and vulnerability, abbreviated as the DEV framework (Wordsworth, McPeak, & Feeny, 2005). First, the Deprivation dimension highlights "the severity, intensity, and contextualized nature of children's experience of impoverishment with regard to their material conditions and access to basic services" (Wordsworth, McPeak, & Feeny, 2005, p.13). The lack of basic necessities affects children's opportunities to realize their full potential. Second, the Exclusion dimension concentrates on "the processes through which individuals or groups of children are wholly or partially marginalized from full participation in the society in which they live" (Wordsworth, McPeak, & Feeny, 2005, p.16). Children are impacted by the experience of stigma or discrimination directly on their gender, race, social class; or indirectly on their relationship with others (e.g. their parents). Third, the Vulnerability dimension focuses on "the dynamic nature of children's experience of poverty in terms of how they are affected by, or resilient to, their array of changing threats in their environment" (Wordsworth, McPeak, & Feeny, 2005, p.18). It reflects the dynamics of child poverty over time and the effect of this precariousness and fragility of their lives.

Likewise, the multi-faceted nature of child poverty is also displayed in other definitions. For example, the Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre (Marshall, 2003) defines childhood poverty as

"Children and young people growing up without access to different types of resources that are vital for their wellbeing and for them to fulfil their potential. By resources we mean economic, social, cultural, physical, environmental and political resources."

This definition lay stress on four interrelated aspects of poverty experienced by children, first, the inadequate livelihood, referring to the absence of economic, physical, and environmental resources; second, the lack of opportunities for human development, referring to the absence of opportunities to achieve their potential in life; third, the dearth of protections and care from parents and community; fourth, the devoid of opportunities for voice, namely, political resources, which underpin other dimensions of poverty.

The United Nations General Assembly has adopted a powerful definition of child poverty in its annual resolution on the rights of the child that,

"Children living in poverty are deprived of nutrition, water and sanitation facilities, access to basic health-care services, shelter, education, participation and protection, and that while a severe lack of goods and services hurts every human being, it is most threatening and harmful to children, leaving them unable to enjoy their rights, to reach their full potential and to participate as full members of society".

In sum, the definition of child poverty is not as well-established as that of poverty. Although only a few definitions have been directly and precisely stated, all of them share some common characteristics. Child poverty is more than just economic hardship, but it encompasses deprivations in many aspects of children's rights including health care, education, living conditions, social inclusion, and life chances. Children should be seen as individuals enjoying the rights of humans, which help promoting the awareness of policy makers and the public to note special rights, protections and needs of children (White, 2002; Redmond, 2008).

4.2.2 Measurement of child poverty

The measurement of child poverty is not easy either. The multi-dimensional nature of poverty includes not only quantifiable variables (e.g. income, consumption, etc.), but also variables are not

easily measurable (e.g. capability deprivation, vulnerability, etc.). Debate with regards to the measurement of child poverty is as wide as the definition of poverty. Researchers, governments, and international organizations use different ways to gauge child poverty according to their specific goals and measures result in various policies to reduce child poverty. Nevertheless, not all the domains of child poverty are measurable due to the complexities of this concept. In general, there are two major approaches to measuring child poverty: monetary and non-monetary.

The monetary approach, also called the indirect measure, is based on the household income. A certain income threshold or poverty line is set up to distinguish the poor from the non-poor. Moreover, the key problem in the monetary approach is how to identify a "correct" poverty line (Gordon & Pantazis, 1997). The poverty measures in this approach fall into two broad groups: absolute and relative threshold. The absolute poverty measure indicates the ability to buy a certain amount of goods and services in order to meet the minimum accepted conventions of need (Corak, 2006; Roelen & Gassman, 2008; Short, 2016). Poverty is identified in relation to some absolute standard and this standard does not change over time except for the adjustment for inflation (Redmond, 2008; Minujn et al., 2006). The threshold is an estimate of the minimum income necessary for a family or an individual to maintain merely physical efficiency such as food, shelter, clothing, sanitation facilities, health, etc. The United States, for example, favors the absolute threshold methodology and defines the poverty line as the amount of money needed to avoid serious material hardship. The federal poverty threshold originally adopted in the 1960s is an estimation of "the minimum food budget required for adequate nutrition, and then using the assumption that food constituted about one-third of a family's expenditure" (Iceland, 2006; Huston, 2011). It consists of a set of thresholds for families of different sizes and is only adjusted for inflation (Schiller, 2008). Another example is the international poverty line used by the World Bank, that is, US$1.90 PPP (purchasing power parity) per person per day.

The relative poverty measure uses a relative standard of income, such as the mean or median household income distribution in a given country, in order to identify poverty. The threshold will rise or drop as the median family income grows or falls, which indicates the relative differences between low-income individuals or households relative to families in the middle level of economic conditions. Hence, the relative threshold primarily highlights patterns of inequality (Dickens & Ellwood, 2003). Moreover, a relative poverty line may offer a way forward for thinking about the implications of living in poverty, such as the inability to participate in the kind of "normal"

activities that encourage social inclusion with their peers or have a "general style of living" in the societies to which they belong due to the lack of sufficient income (Hagenaars & Praag, 1985). This methodology not only demonstrates the adverse impact of absolute low income, but the low income relative to the general situation in a society. In this respect, the relative poverty line is better than the absolute one. The relative poverty measure is often applied in international comparisons. The OECD as well as most European countries and organizations favor the relative threshold to identify child poverty and draw the threshold at a given percentage of median individual or family income distributions in the country. For instance, Bradshaw (2002) studied child poverty in the UK using the relative poverty line that children living in households with income below 50% of the national mean household income. The UNICEF report on child poverty in developed countries used the relative poverty line to measure child poverty in OCED countries. The European Union members and the European Commission usually adopt the 60% threshold to define "the risk of poverty". By using the relative threshold, the child poverty rates decline only if children living in low-income families benefit disproportionately more from economic development than their counterparts in better-off households.

In accordance with the definition of child poverty, it has been widely accepted that the child poverty measurement should also shift from one-dimension to multi-dimension in order to capture the non-monetary aspects of poverty. Moreover, household income is more likely to be misreported, as it sometimes does not reflect the actual living conditions of children if parents do not spend all their income on household goods and services. Hence, a non-monetary aspect should be used to indicate the absence of access to material goods or services such as food, shelter, and clothing, and in this sense one commonly adopted measure is material deprivation.

Peter Townsend pioneered the use of material deprivation in the study of poverty. According to Townsend (1979, p.31), "individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities". Drawing on Townsend's results, the OECD (2007) provides a more specific definition of material deprivation, that is, "the inability for individuals or

households to afford those consumption goods and activities that are typical in a society at a given point in time, irrespective of people's preferences with respect to these items".

The measurement of child poverty using material deprivation is based on the ownership of items that are considered as necessities by the majority of the population (Willitts, 2006). The greater the number of items absent, the severer the degree of people suffering from material deprivation (Mack & Lansley, 1985; Nolan & Whelan, 1996; Goodman & Myck, 2005). One crucial criterion of material deprivation is the "enforced lack". More exactly, it is essential to distinguish people who cannot afford some socially perceived necessities from those choose not to have (Mack & Lansley, 1985; Halleröd, 1995). Using material deprivation to measure poverty has some advantages over the income-based approach. Goodman and Myck (2005) stated that material deprivation can be used as "a proxy for long-term financial status", which seems to encompass "some additional information about a family's financial well-being, over and above the information summarised in the level of current disposable income" (p.11). In addition, there is a lot of debate over the selection of deprivation items. Some argued that households may lack several items that are deemed as necessities, yet they may own various goods that are not used to define material deprivation. As a result, household income and material deprivation reflect different aspects of poverty and should be applied altogether to complement each other instead of acting as a substitute for each other (Muffels, 1993; Halleröd, 1995; Willitts, 2006).

4.3   Child poverty in Europe

Child poverty is not just a social problem in poor countries, it is also a challenge in rich countries. In the EU nations, around 25 million children, namely, over one in four of the population aged 0-17 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2015 (Eurostat, 2016). Although impoverished children may suffer less hardship in developed countries compared to their counterparts in developing countries (Gordon et al., 2003), poverty hinders their ability to participate in social and cultural activities with their peers and access to high-quality education, healthcare, adequate standard of living.

Considerable anti-poverty policies and strategies have been developed to confront child poverty in Europe, but the proportion of children facing poverty risks remains high. Moreover, by hitting labor markets and welfare systems, the Great Recession has severely influenced households

with children in Europe since 2008. Higher unemployment, poorer job quality, and drop in social expenditure on family place children in a more vulnerable situation. Statistics show that the number of children who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion[10] increased by about one million between 2008 and 2012. More than a third of children were at the risk of poverty or social exclusion in Spain, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania in 2015. Poor children are always the most vulnerable and be severally affected during the economic recession. Furthermore, the gap between the rich and the poor has been widening, even in the traditionally egalitarian Nordic countries.
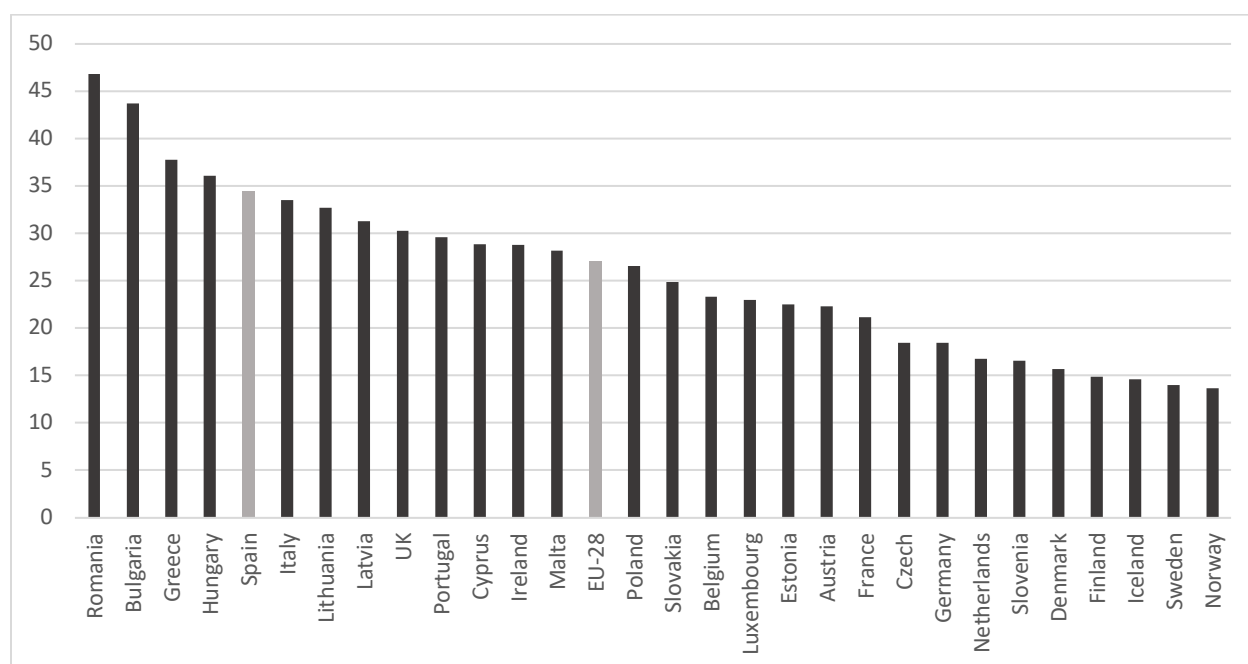
Figure 4.1: Children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2015 by countries (% of total population aged 0-17)
Source: Eurostat 2015

The poverty rate for children varies remarkably across countries and regions. In 2015, the share of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion ranged from 13-16% in the Nordic countries to 46.8% in Romania (see Figure 4.1). The Nordic countries have the lowest proportions of children being at risk of poverty or social exclusion, 13.7% in Norway, 14% in Sweden, 14.9% in Finland, 15.7%

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[10] Children at risk of poverty or social exclusion refers to those (aged 0-17) who either at risk of poverty, or severely materially deprived or living in a household with a very low work intensity (Eurostat).

in Denmark. Oppositely, more than one third of children were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Italy (33.5%), Spain (34.4%), Hungary (36.1%), Greece (37.8%), and the situation was more serious in Bulgaria (43.7%) and Romania (46.8%). In general, it seems that the share of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion depends on the economic situation in a country. Given that one of the most commonly used indicators of economic development status in a country is the per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it has been suggested that children are at a greater risk of poverty or social exclusion in countries with a lower per capita GDP. Nevertheless, a country's wealth does not automatically benefit children. In Ireland, for instance, the per capita GDP is the second highest in the European Union members, but 28.8% of children are at risk of poverty or social exclusion which is below the EU-28 average. As a result, child poverty is strongly related to supports from the welfare system and parents' resources rather than to a country's wealth alone.
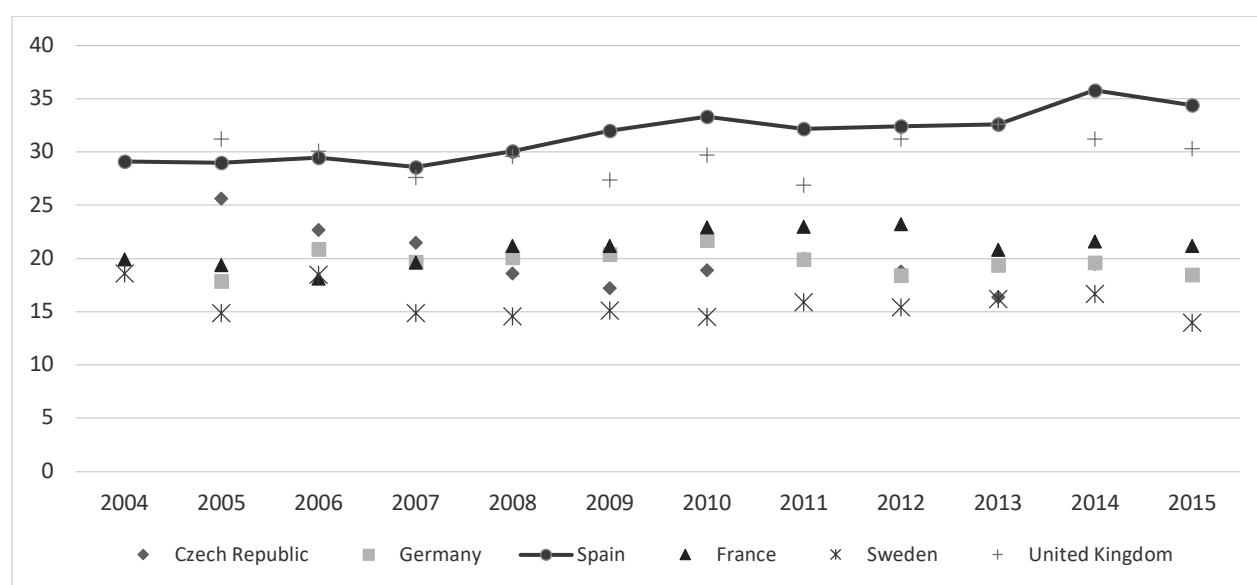
Figure 4.2: The proportion of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in six European countries from 2004 to 2015 (% of total population aged 0-17)

Source: Eurostat
Note: data from the Czech Republic, Germany, the UK is not available in 2004.

Figure 4.2 portrays the evolution of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the six studied countries from 2004 to 2015. Child poverty has been a persistent problem in Spain and the UK. In 2015, around one third of children were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Spain and the UK, which were among countries with the highest risks of child poverty and were well above the EU-28 average. On the contrary, Sweden remained at the bottom of the distribution of children at risk

of poverty or social exclusion , which even slightly decreased from 18.6% of children in 2004 to 14% in 2015. Children in Germany (18.5%), France (21.1%) and the Czech Republic (18.5%) had higher risks of child poverty or social exclusion than their counterparts in the Nordic countries but lower than the EU-28 average. Furthermore, the trends of child poverty over time present a considerably diverging pattern across nations. In Spain (from 29% in 2005 to 34.4% in 2015), France (from 19.4% in 2005 to 21.2% in 2015), and Germany (from 17.9% in 2005 to 18.5% in 2015), the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rates has grown from 2005 to 2015, with the highest increase being recorded in Spain (by 5.4 percentage points). In contrast, the largest decline was observed in the Czech Republic, from 25.6% in 2005 to 18.5% in 2015 (by 7.1 percentage points). In sum, developed nations are not immune to child poverty. On the contrary, the proportion of children living in poverty or social exclusion has risen in most European countries over time. This problem has become more serious after the financial crisis which started around 2008. Thus, there is still a long way to go for economically advanced countries to improve children's living conditions and strongly secure their rights.

4.4   Consequences of child poverty

Poor children suffer a higher incidence of adverse health and developmental outcomes than non-poor children. A large body of research examined the effect of poverty on children's outcomes, which mainly focused on three dimensions: (1) physical health, including birth outcomes, growth stunting, and obesity; (2) emotional, mental, and behavioral health; (3) cognitive ability and academic achievements.

4.4.1 Physical health

Poverty endangers the physical health situation of children at the very beginning of their lives and more importantly, this impact can last through their entire life course. Birth outcomes are important indicators of newborns' health situation, which includes low birth weight (2,500 grams or less), preterm delivery (less than 28 weeks gestational age), and small for gestational age, etc. These birth outcomes are associated with an enhanced likelihood of subsequent health and cognitive problems that can persist through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood (Paneth 1995; Barker et

al., 2002; Jefferis, Power, & Hertzman, 2002; Kajantie et al., 2005; Kaijser et al., 2008; Blumenshine, 2010). Previous studies show that, after adjustments for confounding variables (such as mother's age, education, union status, and health habits), mothers in poor families are more likely to have adverse birth outcomes compared with mothers who are not poor. During the pregnancy, mothers suffer from poverty in terms of inadequate nutrition, adverse material and living conditions, low social supports, stressful conditions with fewer resources to tackle. All of these factors have significant implications for the mother's physical and psychological health, and thus affect newborns' health status and sequent consequences. Inadequate nutrition can affect the health of women and thereby result in adverse pregnancy outcomes (Worthington-Roberts & Williams, 2000; Kramer et al., 2001). Poverty is also related to stressful experiences of mothers, and in this sense poor mothers have higher risks of prenatal and postnatal depression than non-poor mothers (Petterson & Albers, 2001). Maternal depression is negatively associated with parent-infant interactions and subsequent infant cognitive development and health status.

As a consequence of poverty, nutritional deprivation during childhood can have lasting outcomes (Worthington-Roberts & Williams, 2000). Deficits in children's nutritional status are more prevalent among poor children than among non-poor children. Prolonged episodes of nutritional deficiency result in growth stunting (below the fifth percentile of the child population in height for age) (Miller & Korenman, 1994) and impair the children's immune response (Lewit & Kerrebrock, 1997). Moreover, evidence from European countries indicates that chronic physical illness, accidents and injuries are more common among poor children (Spencer, 2010; Sengoelge et al., 2014). Injuries, lead exposure, and inadequate water and sanitation are strongly associated with childhood poverty, which accounts for a larger share of death and disability-adjusted life years among poor children in Europe (Valent et al., 2004). In addition, obesity and overweight among children is strongly linked to relative poverty (Robertson, Lobstein, & Knai, 2007). Studies suggested that children in poor families or from disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately affected by obesity and overweight in developed countries (Dubois et al., 2006; Burns, Jones, & Frongillo, 2010). Children living in poverty are less likely to have a healthy eating habit and engage in physical activity, and more likely to be unhealthy and obese (Lobstein, Baur, & Uauy, 2004).

4.4.2 Mental health and behavioral problems

Children living in poverty are more vulnerable to mental health problems than their peers who are not exposed to poverty (Najman, et al., 2010a; Najman, et al., 2010b). Poor children are more likely to experience depression (Gibbs, 1986) and have lower levels of self-confidence (Langner et al., 1970) relative to non-poor children. In addition, higher incidence of behavioral problems such as internalizing and externalizing disorders were observed among preschoolers and adolescents living in poverty (Dashiff et al., 2009; Reiss, 2013). In short, poverty can endanger children's mental health either by the direct exposure to a range of adversities, including poor living conditions, homelessness, lack of health insurance, or through the poverty-related stress experienced by parents while being raised in a poor family, including deficient parental supervision, harsh punishment, and lack of warmth (Costello, Keeler, & Angold, 2001).

During the infancy and early childhood years, living in poverty can affect children's mental health through biological and psychosocial pathways (Yoshikawa, Aber, & Beardslee, 2012). For young children, the effect of family economic hardship on their mental health depends on their mothers' poverty-related stress through chronic activation of biological stress mechanisms or immune systems (Lupien, et al., 2001; Essex, et al., 2002; Blair & Raver, 2012). Studies showed that mothers' poverty-related stress is positively related to the cortisol levels of children younger than 7 years (Lupien et al., 2001; Essex et al., 2002). In addition, parenting behaviors in families with different economic conditions account for the positive relationship between poverty and young children's distress. McLeod and Shanahan (1993) found that poverty predicted children's internalizing and externalizing symptoms because of poor mother's weak emotional responsiveness and frequent use of physical punishment.

Poverty also plays a significant role in adolescent mental health (Dashiff et al., 2009). In comparison with small children, adolescents are more aware of economic difficulties in their families, and thereby this affects their satisfaction with their family and conditions. The perception of family economic difficulties has a direct influence on adolescents' mood states. Fröjd and colleagues (2006) showed that adolescents' awareness of financial hardship in family was associated with the sense of helplessness, feelings of shame and inferiority, and thus resulted in depression for adolescent girls and drinking problems for adolescent boys in Finland. In addition, poor adolescents are observed to be at higher risks of teen suicide (Fergusson, Woodward, &

Horwood, 2000). Moreover, parents who undergo economic hardship may transmit their distress to their children.

4.4.3 Cognitive ability and academic achievements

Family environment at young ages is a key predictor of children's cognitive abilities. Living in an environment with limited resources and stimulation results in young children's failure to cultivate cognitive skills and places them at an early disadvantage. Poor families tend to provide low quality environment to raise children due to the worse household economic circumstances and parenting. On the one hand, family economic conditions that a child is exposed to in the early years of life affects their learning, self-regulation, and intellectual development (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Bradley and Corwyn (2002) reviewed the relevant literature and concluded that the association between economic circumstances of families and both cognitive skills and social behavior is mediated by their access to stimulating learning materials and opportunities for exploration. For instance, household economic situation determines the quantity and quality of books, magazines, newspapers that a child can acquire and other material goods, which strongly contribute to the early literacy skills and reading performance. On the other hand, family economic circumstances have significant implications for parenting, which in turn affects children's cognitive development. Disadvantaged economic circumstances elevate parents' exposure to negative life events and stressors, thereby disrupting parenting styles, parent-child interactions, and, consequently child cognitive capacity (McLoyd 1997, 1998; Conger & Conger, 2002; Barajas, Philipsen, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007). Children's cognitive abilities depend on a series of factors including the stimulation of language and symbolic communication, adult reinforcement of a child's achievement, and avoidance of inappropriate punishments (Zigler & Finn-Stevenson, 2007). Parental stress caused by economic disadvantages influences a variety of parenting behaviors (Barajas, Philipsen, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007), such as harsh parenting and more physical punishments (Linver et al., 2002); lower levels of parental supportiveness and warmth (Jackson et al., 2000). In addition, research has documented the negative link between family poverty and children's cognitive abilities tends to emerge from very young age (at age 2) (Smith, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1997; Klebanov et al., 1998), and the gap in cognitive skills persists in the long run (Heckman, 2006).

Furthermore, the academic performance of young children and adolescents is influenced by family economic circumstances. Studies have demonstrated that children living in poverty, especially during early childhood, perform poorly in school, with lower educational attainments and lower academic scores (Duncan et al., 1998; Votruba-Drzal, 2006). Children who have experienced poverty have worse academic performance than children from families who were never poor (Moore et al. 2009). Students from the poorest 20% households were found to have the worst score (Pells, 2011). Among adolescents, living in poverty has been related to a greater likelihood of dropping out of school (Teachman et al., 1997), so that there was only one third of children living in poverty who could complete high school (Corak, 2006; Magnuson & Votruba-Drzal, 2008). In addition, the longer children live in poor families, the worse their academic achievements are. The negative academic outcomes of children persist into adulthood, which contributes to a low degree of life-long occupational attainments and even to persistent intergenerational poverty.

There are three main mechanisms underlying the correlation between child poverty and academic outcomes: first, poor children are more likely to be raised by lower educated parents. Parental education is positively related to the cognitive stimulation in the household, and in turn affects children's academic achievements (Yeung, Linver, & Brooks–Gunn 2002; Guo & Harris, 2000). Second, children living in poverty have a higher probability of attending schools with lower resources (Moore et al., 2002). Financial strain limits the choice of neighborhood available to low-income families, and thereby poor children tend to live in neighborhoods characterized by higher crime rates and unemployment rates as well as by fewer opportunities for academic socialization (Black & Krishnakumar, 1998; Engle & Black, 2008). Schools in these neighborhoods are often under-funded, poorly equipped and staffed by teachers with less-qualified teachers. Therefore, the influence of poverty on children's educational achievement is mediated by neighborhood conditions. Third, the socioeconomic condition is associated with the neuro-cognitive brain functioning, which contributes to the reduced school performance of poor children compared to children from advantaged backgrounds (Kishiyama et al., 2009). Poverty and related stress undermine children's working memory, cognitive flexibility, semantic fluency, which have a negative impact on educational achievements.

In sum, children living in an impoverished environment have a higher risk of experiencing serious physical, cognitive, behavioral, emotional problems from infancy to adulthood (Hertzman

& Wiens, 1996; Terry & Susser, 2001; Evans & English, 2002; Hillis et al., 2004; Sepa, Frodi, & Ludvigsson, 2004; Braveman et al., 2010). Moreover, these problems may further undermine their life chances in terms of academic attainments and career achievements. More importantly, the experience of poverty in childhood underpins the intergenerational transmissions of economic adversity and low social status (Machin, 1998). Therefore, it is crucial to find out factors that may cause or are related to child poverty in order to improve the well-being of children.

4.5   Child economic well-being and parents' union status

The economic well-being of children mainly depends on their parents and on society. Children themselves have little control over the circumstances of their birth or the earnings and consumption patterns of their family. In recent decades, the living arrangements of couples with children have become growingly fragile and varied. As family changes such as the prevalence of cohabitation and unmarried births have coincided with the rise in child poverty, this has attracted researchers' and policy makers' attention (McLanahan, Donahue, & Haskins, 2005; Amato & Maynard, 2007). Prior studies on the processes through which family structure is impacting on children's outcomes focus on two aspects: marital status and the selection effect. In this respect, the following questions may be raised: whether and how is parental union status related to children's economic well-being; and to what extent do parents' economic resources account for the disparities in the economic well-being of children between cohabiting- and married-parent households.

Family structure has become a significant mechanism in the production of inequality and poverty (McLanahan, 2004). Over the past few decades, children's living arrangements have become more diverse, with a growing number of children expected to be born to unmarried mothers or experience parents' cohabitation at some point of their lives. In fact, cohabiting women contribute more to the rise in non-marital births than single women in many countries. This happens because unmarried cohabitation has become a frequent choice of union formation and childbearing, especially for first unions and first births.

In previous studies, children in cohabiting-parent households used to be classified into the same group as children living with married parents according to their household structure; or together with children in single-parent households categorized as unmarried children. The impacts of family structure (one-parent versus two-parent households) and parents' marital status (married

versus unmarried) on children's economic well-being have been well-studied (e.g. McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994; Aurora et al., 2000; Waldfogel, Craigie, & Brooks-Gunn, 2010). However, cohabiting-parent households are quite different from single-parent and married-parent ones. On the one hand, considering that both parents are present at home and are available to take care and economically support their children, children in cohabiting-parent households are prone to have more parental resources than those living with single parents. On the other hand, cohabiting parents may have different characteritstics from their married counterparts, and thereby resources available to children living with them may be distinct from those with married parents. Hence, it is necessary to distinguish children in cohabiting-parent families from those living with single or married parents.

More recent studies concerning the link between family structure and child well-being have broadened their scope to include cohabiting unions. Studies suggest that children living in cohabiting-parent households fare worse than children in families headed by married parents, while fare better than children living in lone-parent families in terms of their economic well-being (Manning & Lichter, 1996; Carlson & Danziger, 1999; Acs & Nelson, 2002; Lerman, 2002; Manning & Brown, 2006); and of physical and psychological health (Osborne & McLanahan, 2008; Fomby & Osborne, 2010; Schmeer, 2011).

Conger and Donnellan (2007) reviewed studies and theory concerning the issue of health disparities (particularly in the development of children and adolescents) and produced a theoretical framework to explain the correlations between socioeconomic status, family processes, and human development, which has been widely applied in studies regarding child well-being. They proposed two main theoretical approaches to interpreting the associations: the social selection and the social causation. Social selection approach argues that the traits and dispositions of parents affect their social status and the well-being of their children. From the social causation perspective, it predicts that social position leads to variations in outcomes of children and adults. These two theoretical approaches will be applied to explore the mechanisms underlying the associations between parental union status, economic resources, and children's economic well-being in the following parts.

4.5.1 The social causation explanation

The social causation approach suggests that parental union status leads to diverse economic well-being of children in different living arrangements. Furthermore, there are two possible mechanisms in this theoretical approach. First, marriage *per se* offers economic benefits. Married fathers appear to receive more economic benefits from marriage and fatherhood than their cohabiting counterparts, which in turn lead to higher economic resources available to their children. Second, parents' financial investment and economic resources available to their children may vary by their unions statuses. Cohabiting parents may make less investments to the household and children, including household common goods and services related to children's living standards as well as other resources that are expected to foster children's academic and social success, than married parents.

On the one hand, married men enjoy a wage premium relative to their unmarried counterparts (as discussed in Chapter 2). There are three main explanations for this causal relationship, (1) the positive impact of marriage on the productivity of men, resulting from the intra-household labor division within marriages, which give men more energy and time to devote to market activities. (2) married men may also be more productive because marriage causes men to become more stable and committed workers. (3) employer discrimination in favor of married men (Gorman, 2000; Hersch & Stratton, 2000; Cohen, 2002; Stratton, 2002). Some employers view men's market labor as consistent with breadwinner obligations (Prokos & Keene, 2010) and perceive married men as stable employees. It is noteworthy the marriage premium reflects on both high wage and wage rise of married men.

Fathers' economic resources play a vital role in child well-being and outcomes (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Fatherhood is also associated with high earnings or a rise in income (Hersch & Stratton 2000; Lundberg & Rose 2002; Hodges & Budig 2010). The cost of raising children motivates fathers to work more than childless men in order to meet children's needs. Fatherhood reveals to men that they have someone to live for (Eggebeen & Knoester, 2001), which may enhance their sense of responsibilities and in turn increases positive behavior and greater commitments to their careers (Knoester & Eggebeen, 2006; Augustine, Nelson, & Edin, 2009). Moreover, fathers are also more prone to invest more in human capital that will be rewarded in their employment (Killewald, 2012). Therefore, fathers may show greater attachments to the labor market and higher levels of the intensity of work involvement, and thus results in the rise in wage earnings and in the

chance of promotions. The disparities by parental union statuses concerning the fatherhood premium may have implications for the economic resources that children can get access to. Many studies have shown that the fatherhood premium is larger for married than for unmarried fathers (Glauber, 2008; Hodges & Budig, 2010). Killewald (2012) went one step further and stressed the variations in the fatherhood premium by drawing distinctions among unmarried fathers, and especially including cohabiting fathers. Cohabitation is less institutionalized compared to marriage (Nock, 1995), implying that the labor division within household differs between married and cohabiting parents (South & Spitze, 1994; Davis, Greenstein, & Marks, 2007; Domínguez-Folgueras, 2013). Hence, the role of breadwinner may be stronger and less ambiguous for married fathers than for cohabiting fathers. Moreover, Hodges and Budig (2010) found that the wage gains for fathers are significantly larger when their other characteristics are consistent with hegemonic masculinity in the workplace such as marriage and traditional gender division of labor in household. Employers may have more biased perceptions of married fathers than of unmarried cohabiting fathers, for example, and may deem the former as more responsible and committed. Although most studies regarding the wage premium of married fathers used longitudinal analysis, it is reasonable to assume that the economic advantages of married fathers over cohabiting ones can be found in a cross-sectional analysis based on Bardasi and Taylor's (2008) results. By using both cross-sectional and longitudinal data, Bardasi and Taylor (2008) found that men's marriage premium in cross-sectional analysis is lower than in longitudinal analysis, but it still remains and cannot be explained by the selection effect.

Studies have found that married women and mothers pay a wage penalty compared to unmarried and childless women respectively (Budig & England, 2001; Anderson, Binder, & Krause, 2002; Hewitt, Western, & Baxter, 2002; Correll, Bernard, & Paik, 2007). Hence, the combination of the wage premium for married fathers and the wage penalty for married mothers may lead to the overstatement of the disparities by parental union statuses. However, as the growth of women's participation in the labor force and the increase in average time in paid work, empirical studies found a marriage premium for childless women (Waldfogel, 1997; Taniguchi, 1999; Budig & England, 2001; Glauber, 2007; Killewald & Gough, 2013). Moreover, research shows that marriage does not moderate the negative relationship between motherhood and wages; more exactly, the motherhood penalty for married women is not significantly larger than for unmarried mothers (Killewald & Gough, 2013).

On the other hand, parents invest financial and human capital to promote the well-being of their children, which may differ across their union statuses. Considering that cohabitors tend to be less committed to each other and to their children, they are prone to invest less into their households and not adequately promote child well-being as married couples do. The nature of commitments in cohabitation is distinct from marriage in two major respects: legal commitments and interpersonal commitments (McClain, 2011; Poortman & Mills, 2012). First, cohabitation is legally less regulated and protected than marriage. Legally, it is more difficult for spouses to separate compared to cohabiting couples. Therefore, married people are prone to make more investments into their relationships and households in that marriage entails a legally enforceable contract protecting both partners against the risks of their investment. Empirical findings indicate that cohabiting fathers, irrespective of whether they are biologically related to the child or not, have lower levels of investments than married fathers (Hofferth & Anderson, 2003). One probable explanation for the lower investments of cohabiting fathers relative to married fathers is that the former does not automatically have the legitimacy and rights of married fathers, even though they have some responsibilities. On the contrary, cohabiting mothers do not differ significantly from married mothers in terms of investments and supports to their children (Kendig & Bianchi, 2008) given that unmarried mothers are entitled to the same rights and responsibilities as married ones.

The contentious and fragile nature of cohabitation makes either partner to be more reluctant to invest money and time to improve the well-being of their children and household (DeLeire & Kalil, 2005). Unlike cohabitation, marriage usually signals a long-term binding decision (Cherlin, 2000; Rhoades, Stanley, & Markman, 2006). DeLeire and Kalil (2005) suggest that cohabiting parents would focus more on individual adult priorities than on the family as a whole or on child well-being compared to their married counterparts. Their findings indicate that the spending pattern of cohabiting-parent households differs from that of married-parent households both in the level and the share of money allocated to various expenditure categories. In comparison to married parents, cohabiting parents are inclined to spend more on adult-related goods (e.g. alcohol and tobacco) and less on child-related goods. Moreover, they may invest less into the household common goods, and thereby, contribute less to provide their children with a healthy environment. Cohabitors are prone to keep finances separate (Heimdal & Houseknecht, 2003; Lyngstad, Noack, & Tufte, 2010) and make less joint investments into their relationships. Therefore, cohabiting parents may not be fully devoted to improve the well-being of their households by sharing

resources as married parents are, and in turn children living in these families tend to have lower living standards than children living in married-parent families. In addition, cohabitors report lower levels of relationship quality and stability than married couples (Thomson & Colella, 1992; Nock, 1995; Brown & Booth, 1996; Hardie & Lucas, 2010), and have higher frequency of arguing and fighting (Musick & Bumpass, 2006; Van der Lippe, Voorpostel, & Hewitt, 2014). Economic theory and models regarding marriage indicates that couples are inclined to make fewer investments into their relationship or in other family goods when they expect their unions to end or are less committed (Becker, Landes, & Michael, 1977; Rusbult, 1980). More importantly, the lower union quality could weaken fathers' motivation to provide support to mothers (Ryan, Tolani, & Brooks-Gunn, 2009).

Furthermore, empirical studies present that income received by cohabitors, relative to married couples, contribute significantly less to reduce material hardship of their households (Bauman, 1999; Lerman, 2002). Lerman (2002) found that married parents suffer lower level of material hardship than cohabiting parents even when the two may have similar incomes, demographic and other socioeconomic characteristics. As a result, cohabiting parents may be quite different from their married counterparts in the contributions of their incomes to meet household needs. Moreover, married parents may have greater access to economic support and help from family, friends than cohabiting parents have (Lerman, 2002). Clarkberg, Stolzenberg, and Waite (1995) found that cohabitors tend to be less attached to their parents and other kin than married spouses. As a result, parents' marriage *per se* may provide children economic advantages over those living in cohabiting-parent households through direct advantages in wages gained by fathers or by differences in the resource allocation and money management within a household by parental union patterns.

4.5.2 The social selection explanation

Selection into a certain union status implies that there are factors that both enhance the level of child well-being and the possibility of choosing one living arrangement over the other. Couples are free to choose whether to marry or cohabit, relying on which status they believe to be the best for themselves and for the well-being of their children. Marriage is generously viewed as a more stable and long-term living arrangement with higher levels of legal and policy protection. Despite

the dramatic increase in cohabitation, the majority of people still value marriage and see marriage as the final goal to achieve, particularly when they attain economic stability or achieve certain financial goals (Edin & Kefalas, 2005; Smock, Manning, & Porter 2005). Therefore, cohabiting parents are likely to differ from their married counterparts in many aspects except for their legal marital status, such as socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. It is possible that the unfavorable outcomes of children living in cohabiting families relative to children in married households may be partially or totally attributed to the divergence between cohabiting and married parents.

Some argued that married fathers' economic advantages may stem from self-selection into marriage and parenthood (Nakosteen & Zimmer, 1997). Men with higher earning potential are valued more in the marriage market and, thereby, they are more prone to marry (Ginther, & Zavodny, 2001) and have children within marriage. Hence, married fathers over cohabiting fathers' advantages in the labor market, such as higher chances of getting promotions and higher wages, may account for the disparities in economic well-being of children in married- and cohabiting-parent households. In addition, women with poorer attributes have a higher probability of giving birth outside of marriage due to their relatively low opportunity costs of childbearing (Goodman & Greaves, 2010) and their less promising labor market. They are more attractive to "unmarriageable" men, which again reduce their incentive to postpone childbearing and wait for marriage.

Previous studies from the US demonstrate the disproportionate selection of couples with lower economic resources into cohabiting relationships and cohabiting parenthood (Lillard, Brien, & Waite, 1995; Kenney & McLanahan, 2006). Cohabiting parents have a higher likelihood of low education levels, low income and unemployment than married parents (Manning & Lichter, 1996; Acs & Nelson, 2002; Kenney, 2003). Even though cohabitation may be financially advantageous for children by providing two incomes, a great proportion of children living in cohabiting-parent families remain in poverty because cohabiting parents possess more often lower socioeconomic resources than married parents (Carlson & Danziger, 1999; Acs & Nelson, 2002; Manning & Brown, 2006). After adjustment for parents' socioeconomic characteristics, the initial advantages to children from marriage compared with cohabitation are much reduced or even disappear (Carlson & Danziger, 1999; Brown, 2004; Manning & Brown, 2006).

In Europe, non-marital births occur much more frequently among unmarried cohabiting parents than in the United States. The relationship between cohabitation and the risk of child poverty varies considerably across nations, and results on the relationship between parents' union status, socioeconomic characteristics, and child well-being are less consistent in Europe. The Nordic countries are known for low overall child poverty rates and a high proportion of children born within cohabitation. Research indicates that in Sweden, children in cohabiting parent families have the same poverty rate as those in married parent households (Heuveline & Weinshenker, 2008), despite the fact that the better educated Swedes are more likely to have children within marriage than their less-educated counterparts (Kennedy & Thomson, 2010). Oppositely, child poverty continues to be a serious problem and remains high in the UK. Results show that children living with cohabiting parents have higher odds of being poor than their counterparts living with married parents after controlling for maternal education (Bradshaw & Holmes, 2010). In Spain, to my knowledge, there is no study concerning the connection between family structure and economic well-being of children taking cohabitation into consideration. Empirical evidence only examined the diversity in the risk of child poverty between two-parent families and lone-parent families and illustrated that children in the single-parent families are more likely to fall into poverty and remain poor than children in two-parent families after controlling for parents' education levels (Cantó-Sánchez & Mercader-Prats, 1998; 2002). Therefore, it is important to get knowledge about the socioeconomic profiles of cohabiting fathers and mothers relative to their married counterparts and to explore the potential link between parents' cohabitation and children's economic well-being in Spain compared to other European countries and over time.

Chapter 5 Changing political, economic, and social context of the Spanish families

5.1 The political system

5.1.1 Franco's dictatorship

The Franco dictatorship was established on the victory in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and this regime lasted for approximately forty decades until the death of Franco in November 1975 (Richards, 1998). At that time, the economic system and social life in Spain were characterized by high levels of state intervention (Molina & Rhodes, 2007).

During the Franco regime, the Catholic Church was granted a privileged status. Catholicism was recognized as the official religion of the country, the Church received financial support from the state, mandatory religious education and social-service networks were guaranteed. Church attendance and religious practice were widespread (Brañas-Garza & Neuman, 2004). The social, economic, political and cultural forces of the country were deeply influenced by the Catholic doctrine. The influence of the Spanish Catholic Church and La Falange (Spain's fascist party) on the social and political regulations of women was more profound. Religious traditions and conservative ideologies privileged the patriarchal gender roles (Sanchez & Hall, 1999; Miret-Gamundi, 2000). Women at that time suffered from the educational and employment discrimination, the subordinate role at home, a strong restriction imposed by the religious code.

Intervention in the education system was regarded a key measure to force women back into the domestic sphere. The Church dominated the education system by establishing schools, censoring books, and assigning inspectors to ensure that no teaching conflicted with the Catholic doctrine (McNeir, 1984). Co-education was banned immediately after the end of the Civil War and remained in effect for almost thirty years (Shubert, 2003, p214). Followed the "Christian principle of single-gender education", girls and boys were separated into different classrooms and/or schools. More importantly, these schools provided a distinctly gender-based division of curriculum (Gossett, 2004). In primary education, the main concentration was on the "religious, moral and patriotic principles which are the driving force of the glorious National Movement" instead of the content of instruction (McNeir, 1984, p29). Both the Church and the Falange were interested in dominating the educational system, but their main emphasis shifted from primary to

secondary education, which used to be seen as the incubator to the future elites (McNeir, 1984; Flecha, 2010). For women who continued schooling, there were two parallel pathways after the primary education: the primary teacher training and an academic track named *bachillerato* (Canales, 2012). The training colleges for primary teachers were gender-segregated in both students and staff (Lannon, 1991). Given the scarcity of women with a university degree (females made up around 12% of overall university enrollment in the 1940s), the single-sex education system virtually led to the inequality in education between girls and boys at the very beginning. Although the trajectory from the *bachillerato* to university was not prohibited for women, the government made it clear that it was not encouraged (Canales, 2012). In addition, a differentiated secondary curriculum was devised to produce good wives and mothers. Female students studying the *bachillerato* were obligated to attend the *enseñanzas del hogar* (education for the home), including courses such as cooking, sewing, gardening, and domestic economy (Flecha, 2010). These courses were designed to prepare girls "for their elevated function in the family and the home" by developing their household skills and motherhood (Flecha, 2010; Canales, 2012). It is worthwhile to note that women from well-off families had another option: the girls-only academic secondary schools (Canales, 2012). These private schools guaranteed selection for females from the upper class or affluent families that again consolidated the social class segregation.

The Catholic ideology restricted women's activities to the private realm, underlining their exclusive role as a wife, a mother, and a guardian of the home. Spanish women were largely invisible in the public arenas of work and politics in the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries (Enders & Radcliff, 1999). In 1960, for instance, only 13% of Spanish women worked outside the home and they were usually forced to give up their career when they married (Kaplan, 2004, p90). During the Spanish Civil War, women worked in factories and industries of the home front or provided different services in clinics and launderettes for military fronts (Martin Moruno, 2010). They were warriors, political leaders, nurses and workers. The triumph of Franco in the Civil War marked the beginning of the darkness for working women. In 1938, Franco declared the *Fuero del Trabajo*, with the aim of "liberating the married woman from the workshop and the factory", so women were enforced to return to the private sphere and were suppressed their capability to be active in the labor market (Davidson, 2011). Once married, working women were expected to withdraw from the labor market and were usually dismissed from the current job with little compensation. The 1944 *Ley de Contrato de Trabajo* refused to provide equal protections for

female workers until its repeal in 1962 (Gálvez Muñoz & Fernández Pérez, 2007). A policy published in 1957 prohibited women from "dangerous" work, such as industries with the demand of heavy lifting, the use of large machines and chemicals, and "moral" jeopardizing jobs (Basora Francesch, 1964, p126). Moreover, women's engagement in economic activity was also determined by legal restrictions. They could not sign contracts or engage in commerce without the permission of her father or her husband (Davies, 1998), which restricted their access to business and entrepreneurship (Gálvez Muñoz & Fernández Pérez, 2007). Except for the religious and social constraints, the educational gap between men and women also accounted for the labor segregation. Women's less chances to attain higher education levels diminished their competition in the labor market.

The social protection programs were highly fragmented and largely neglected in the Franco regime (Guillén, 1992; Carrasco & Rodríguez, 2000). The social security system was built on the integration of formerly separated agencies including maternity services (established in 1926), occupational injury insurance (in 1938), disability insurance (in 1939), health insurance (in 1942), pensions (in 1919) (Gunther, 1996), and was administered by National Institute for Social Provision (*Instituto Nacional de Prevision*). This system was financed through contributions by employees and employers and was thereby exclusively entitled to workers in order to offer protection against unexpected risks. It was not until 1969 that unemployment insurance was established as an affiliation to the retirement and sickness insurance schemes. However, public assistance to population other than workers was paternalistic and charity-based (Arriba & Moreno, 2005). Social insurance was only available for workers and their dependents such as wives and children instead of all citizens (Miret-Gamundi, 2000). There were very limited public assistance and measures to alleviate poverty, which mainly relied on private organizations, such as the Red Cross, quasi-public saving banks (*Obras Sociales de las Cajas de Ahorro*) and those related to the Church (Arriba & Moreno, 2005).

Family policies were anti-feminist and pro-natalist during the Francoism (Almeda & Sarasa, 1996; Valiente, 1996). The period between 1939[11] and 1959 was called the "peak of Francoist family policies" (Pérez-Caramés, 2014: p178; also see, Iglesias & Meil Landwerlin, 2001), during which a number of family policies were introduced. Family allowances (*subsidio familiar*) were

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[11] In fact, some family policies were introduced in 1938, for instance, the law of "family allowances" (*Ley de Subsidios Familiares*) was introduced in July 18, 1938.

introduced to encourage women's return from work to family and take the responsibility of caring for their children and husbands. This family benefit was monthly paid cash to employees as a complement to their incomes. The amount of the benefit only depended on the number of children under 14 years of age and did not vary with changes in earnings (Valiente 1996). In 1945, the "dependent bonus" (plus de cargas familiares) was introduced on the basis of the notion "family salary" (Pérez-Caramés, 2014). The target population was the male waged workers with dependents, including his wife, children, and elders living with them. This bonus was financed completely by employers and managed independently by a committee formed by workers in each company (Valiente, 1996). From 1948, large families with more than three children were rewarded with nuptiality prizes that included a cash bonus and discounts on various services such as public transport, loans, school fees, and so on (Nash, 1991, p171). It is worthwhile to note that only married couples were entitled to family benefits and enjoy the interest-free state loans (Davidson, 2011). Children living with a single mother were excluded from the welfare system (Moreno & Sarasa, 1993). Tax relief did exist at that time, but the protecting scope was very limited because the reductions per child were exclusively available for large families (Pérez-Caramés, 2014).

In tune with the pro-natalist principle of the Church, fertility was significantly high due to a restriction on the use of contraception (McQuillan, 2004). The social discrimination and marginalization of unmarried mothers during the Franco era were considerably high. Premarital sex, divorce, and abortion were strictly forbidden, and extra-marital cohabitation was seriously stigmatized. Hence, marriage was the only socially and morally recognized context for forming an independent household, engaging in sexual activity, and having children.

5.1.2 Transition from Francoism to democracy

In the 1950s, Spain underwent a series of crises and was besieged by "bottlenecks in the procurement and distribution of materials and products, inflation, trade deficits, currency emergencies, and … a wave of strikes" (Sánchez, 2010, p12). In order to confront with these serious problems, the National Stabilization Plan was enacted by the government in 1959. Meanwhile, the autarkic system, characterized by economic nationalism, state intervention, and protectionism, collapsed. Spain ended its isolation status and opened up to international trade and foreign investments (de la Escosura, Rosés, & Sanz-Villarroya, 2011). In the following decade,

the Stabilization Plan launched the greatest economic upheaval in the recent history of Spain, which was also followed by vast social and cultural transformations (de la Escosura & Sanz, 1996).

During the 1960s, the opening of the economy and the modernization of Spain brought about a boom of foreign tourism and mass migration of Spaniards to other parts of Europe. The knowledge, social values and gender equality were inevitably spread from the Western and Northern European countries to Spanish society. Likewise, an important domestic rural exodus to Spanish developed areas took place. The increasing industrialization and urbanization led to inner migration from countryside to cities, which also deeply broadened women's consciousness of their status and values (Colomina-Limonero, 2014).

The economic liberalization and international market integration brought profound changes in the educational system. Technological innovation required educational expansion and merit-based selection (Parsons, 1951; Gil-Hernández, Marqués-Perales, & Fachelli, 2017). The reform of the educational system was an implicit and explicit requirement for the integration of Spain into Europe and into the competition of the international market. The reconstruction of the whole system of education was based on a report (*Libro Blanco*) published in 1969. Finally, the General Law of Basic Education (Ley General de Educación Básica) was passed in August 1970. The Act established a common school curriculum that applied equally to girls and boys and enforced compulsory education till the age of 14 (Pérez-Samaniego & Santamaría-García, 2013). In order to reduce the gender discrepancies in school structures, the single-sex system of Catholic education was replaced by co-educational school programs (Zufiaurre, Pellejero, & Weiner, 2010).

The economic modernization in the 1960s created opportunities for women to work outside households. The national strategy for boosting industrial production growth necessitated to include women in the waged labor market (Davidson, 2011). The booming tourism industry and service sectors elevated women's access to employment. Equal opportunity in higher education also empowered women and girls and enhanced their competition in the labor market. Although the majority of women still stayed at home and remained inactive, the proportion of working women rose from 8% in 1940 to 15% in 1960 (Durán, 1972).

Women's status in the labor market and rights as a worker were gradually recognized as well. In 1961, the Law for Political, Professional and Labour Rights for Women (*Ley de Derechos Políticos, Profesionales, y de Trabajo de la Mujer*) was published and then amended in 1966. This measure indicated a great step to promote gender equality and improve the social status of women.

This law proclaimed women's rights to vote for and to be elected in public office and stipulated their rights to compete with men for the civil service position. However, for married women, a marital permission from her husband was required if she wanted to have a job albeit they had obtained access to employment after being married (Davidson, 2011). In addition, women had to endure several work restrictions and they were still banned from certain professions such as magistrates, soldiers, judges, lawyers, etc[12].

5.1.3 From the democratic transition up to the present

The Spanish transition to democracy began shortly following the death of Franco in 1975. Transformations in politics, economy, culture swept the entire country. The 1978 Constitution proclaimed that Spain has no official religion and recognized the religious liberty (Cumper & Lewis, 2012, p108), even though it also stated that "public authorities shall take into account the religious beliefs of Spanish society and shall consequently maintain appropriate cooperation relations with the Catholic Church and other confessions". More importantly, the reform in education system followed the route of secularization by excluding religious education from mandatory subjects (Gómez-Quintero, 2004). The church attendance and the participation of religious activities significantly declined in the following decades after the separation of State and Church. As a result, the Catholic Church gradually lost its dominant status and stepped out of both the public and the private spheres.

The 1990 General Organic Law of the Educational System (*Ley Orgánica General del Sistema Educativo*) marked a huge step forward for the gender equality in education. The principle of "education for equality" (*Educación para la igualdad*) was taken into account in all subjects of the curriculum. Since then, both boys and girls can receive education that allows them to fully develop. In more recent decades, women's enrollment in tertiary education has considerably risen, which exceeds that of men. More education empowers women, improves their social status and control over partnership as well as parenthood behavior, and in turn leads to dramatic transformations in families. In addition, increased education of women promotes not only their labor market involvement but also the access to better employment and higher career advancement

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[12] Women were not allowed to serve in military institutions until 1988.

opportunities (Salido, 2011; León & Migliavacca, 2013). In societies with a strong patriarchal tradition, in particular, higher levels of education can enhance the competitiveness of women in the labor market. Statistics show that female participation in the labor force has steadily increased over the last few decades in Spain (Garrido, 1992; Cárceles, 2006; Miret-Gamundi, 2006; Pérez-Diaz, 2007), from 25% in 1977 to 63% in 2013 (Guner, Kaya, & Sánchez-Marcos, 2014).

The transition from dictatorship to democracy brought important changes in family issues, which was also related to the process of secularization: the birth control was legalized in 1978; divorce was legally approved in 1981; and abortion laws were liberalized in 1985 (Solsten & Meditz, 1988, p2). On 30 June 2005, the Spanish Parliament amended the Civil Code in order to permit same-sex marriage (which was vigorously opposed by the Church) and made Spain the third country in the world to allow same-sex couples to marry.
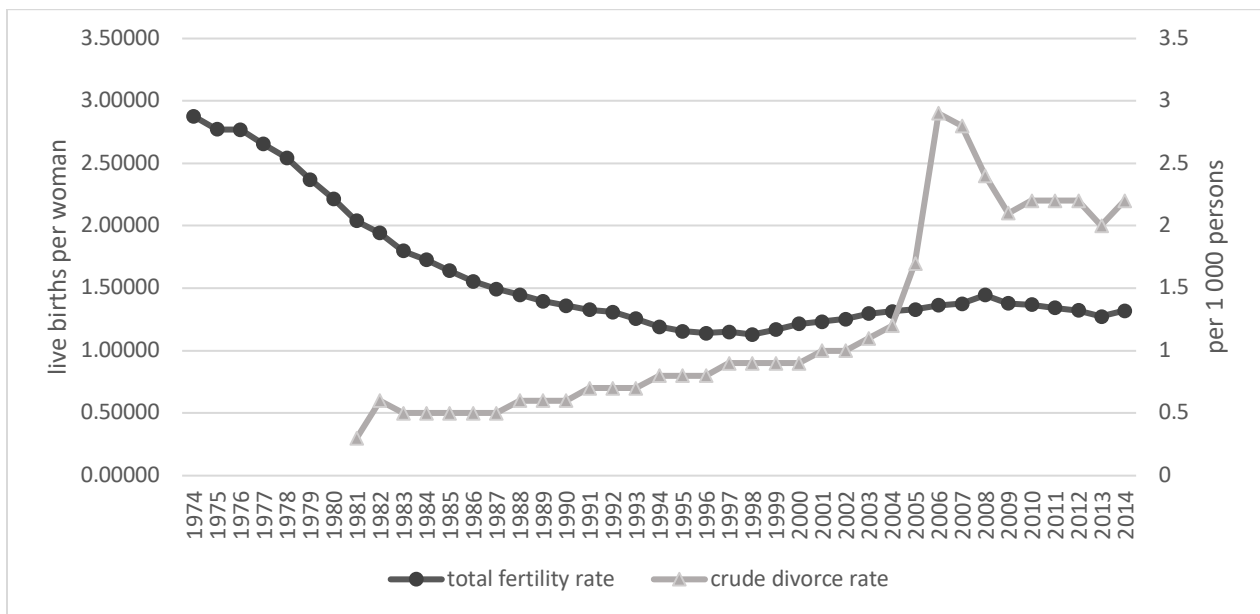
Figure 5.1: Total fertility rates and crude divorce rates in Spain, 1974-2014
Source: Eurostat

The total fertility rate in Spain suffered a sharp decline, fell from 2.88 in 1974 to 1.17 in 1999 and then enhanced only slightly to around 1.35 in subsequent years (see Figure 5.1). The crude marriage rate remained reducing from 7.8 per 1000 persons in 1974 to 3.3 in 2015. There has been a substantial growth in the rate of divorce since 1981, particularly after the publication of the new

divorce law, the rate immediately soared from 1.7 per1000 persons to 2.9 within one year (2005-2006).

5.2   The structure of the labor market

One of the main characteristics of the labor market in Spain is persistent and high unemployment. In fact, the persistence of unemployment harks back to the early 1980s and has continued to haunt the Spanish labor market since then. From the end of Franco's regime, the Spanish economy system has experienced a complete transformation. The self-efficiency economic model was completely overturned. The modernization of the economy and the liberalization of market brought great opportunities and challenges to this nation. The Spanish labor market became one of the areas that had been most influenced by this transformation. The integration of Spain in international markets brought greater working chances, especially for women, provided the tourism boom and the development of the service sector. However, the process of the transformation was accompanied by political reform and coincided with the oil crisis in the later 1970s and the early 1980s. This coincidence further strengthened the impact of economic crisis on the labor market. As concluded by Bentolila and Blanchard (1990, p233), "the specificity comes from the Franco legacy, which left Spain in the mid-1970s with both an archaic system of labor relations and an inadequate production structure", which made the influence of the economic crisis in Spain much stronger than in most European countries.

The unemployment rate reached a peak at 21.6% in 1985, which was disproportionate in relation to Western and Northern Europe. During the economic recovery launched after the late half of the 1980s more than 1.5 million jobs were created (Lieberman, 2005). The most impressive employment growth occurred in the construction industry — sharply increased at an average annual rate of about 10% between 1986 and 1990, and service sectors — rose at an average annual rate of 6% (Jimeno & Toharia, 1994). However, the employment surge did not lead to a corresponding decline in unemployment, so that the reduction was modest. It is important to note that the unemployment rate of men decreased considerably, while the female unemployment rose during the economic recovery (Figure 5.2). The economic recovery did not narrow the gap between men and women in terms of the unemployment situation. Instead, gender differentials in unemployment continued to increase. Between 1988 and 1990, unemployment rates of women

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were two times higher than that of men (e.g. 25.22% of women compared to 12.02% of men in 1989). One possible explanation was the economic recovery also set in motion substantial rises in women's labor force participation (Jimeno & Toharia, 1994). Therefore, the reduction in unemployment overall was minor compared with the increase (down to around 16% in total in 1989).

Figure 5.2: Unemployment rates of men and women (%) in Spain, from 1976 to 2014
Source: INE Instituto Nacional de Estadística (España)

After the strong economic recovery, it came the "economic miracle" in Spain (Lieberman, 2005). Between the late 1990s and the mid-2000s, the unemployment rates steadily decreased and stayed below 10% for three consecutive years since 2005 (but still higher than the EU average). However, gender differences in unemployment remained large not only in upturns but also in downturns of the economy until the last recession (occurred around 2008). Bachman and Sinning (2014) argued that the gender differential observed in Spain could not be explained by the changes in female labor participation over the business cycle. In fact, women's participation in the labor force has continuously risen since 1976 to the present (De la Rica & Rebollo-Sanz, 2017). Moreover, despite the expansion of the job availability in traditionally female-dominated professions during the economy upward, women's unemployment was considerably higher than that for men as well. This phenomenon might be attributed to a still-present discrimination against women in the labor market in Spain (Philips, 2010). The 2008 economic crisis severely hit Spain, the unemployment

rate soared from 8.2% in 2007 to 24.5% in 2014, which was nearly 2.5 times above the EU-average (10.2% of EU-28 in 2014). Nowadays, the combination of "pervasive long-term unemployment, low outflow rates and ill-equipped public employment services" result in a considerable risk of economic and social exclusion in Spain (Jansen, Jimenez-Martin, & Gorjun, 2016). Interestingly, women's and men's unemployment rates have converged since 2008[13]. According to the explanations proposed by De la Rica and Rebollo-Sanz (2017), the current crisis has led to a positive selection process, indicating that better-educated and higher-skilled workers finally kept their jobs during the Great Recession. This selection partially accounts for the narrowing gender gap in unemployment rates provided that women in the labor market in general have higher educational levels than men. In addition, male employment was disproportionately hit by the current crisis due to a high level of job destruction in the construction sector in which over 90% workers are men. These men face greater difficulties in finding another job especially during the financial crisis because most of them have low skills and low educational attainments. On the contrary, job creation rates for women remained stable due to the structural transformation of economies to the tertiarization of employment (Conde-Ruiz & Marra, 2016).

Except for the persistent and high level of unemployment rate, the high proportion of temporary or fixed-term employment is another characteristic of the Spanish labor market. In the mid of 1980s, the labor market reform introduced new legal regulations for fixed-term contracts while keeping untouched the legal protection for permanent workers. This measure aimed to confront the persistent and high unemployment rates through enhancing the flexibility of the labor market (Jimeno & Toharia, 1994). The introduction of fixed-term contracts greatly reduced the hiring costs of employers and thus, the share of temporary employment increased dramatically and reached 30% at the end of 1980s (Casals, 2004). The higher share of fixed-term contracts shows the formally segmentation and unfairness in the Spanish labor market. More specifically, fixed-term contracts entail lower employment security due to the low levels of legal protection relative to permanent contracts (Jimeno & Toharia, 1993). While permanent contracts offer more employment stability by a higher degree of on-the-job protection.

The third main feature of the labor market in Spain is the prevalence of the illicit economy (Flaquer, 2000; Flaquer & Escobedo, 2009), also called "black economy" or "shadow economy".

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[13] Women's unemployed rates have even been slightly lower than men's since 2015.

As addressed by Arrazola et al. (2011), the shadow economy can bring a series of detrimental outcomes — the increase of inequality, the decline of tax revenue, the raise of efficiency problem, and the distortion of business competition. These outcomes further result in the decline of social welfare due to their negative impacts on tax bases and social security systems (Buehn & Schneider, 2012). Spain is one of the European countries with the largest underground economy. As concluded by Flaquer and Escobedo (2009, p160), "a relatively high tax burden on formal employment and a quite low level of social protection within a historical context of high unemployment and some degree of mistrust of public institutions and taxation" altogether contribute to the high rates of informal employment and the development of the shadow economy in Spain. The informal economy workers are mainly composed of young people, adult women (in domestic service), illegal immigrants, and those who have low qualifications. Although the reforms of employment legislation in the 1980s tried to replace the employment in the black economy with temporary flexible employment (Cano & Sánchez, 1998), the effect was very modest. In particular, from 1998 onwards, informal employment and the shadow economy have further expanded due to the growing presence of illegal immigration (Flaquer & Escobedo, 2009). Despite taking into account the 2005 "regularization" process[14] and the introduction of the "Law on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent Persons" in 2006, as well as the increased provision of early education and care[15], the shadow economy remained high and kept growing. Furthermore, since the beginning of the current economic and financial crisis, the informal economy has been booming. According to the estimation of a recent report published by the Ministry of Finance and Civil Service of Spain (Informe del Ministerio de Hacienda de España), the shadow economy accounted for approximately 20-25% of GDP at the end of 2012, increased from 17.8% in 2008 (Sardà, 2014; Meroño Herranz, 2017). In 2010-2011, about four million workers were estimated to be engaged in shadow economy activities (Etxezarreta et al., 2011). A royal decree was enacted in May 2011 as a curative measure. The decree grants an amnesty for

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[14] In 2005, the extraordinary regularization programme granted legal status to over half a million unauthorized immigrants who met the eligibility criteria: (1) residence in Spain since August 8, 2004; (2) employment contract for at least six months (three months in the case of agricultural jobs); (3) no criminal record (Aragon & Jachimowicz, 2005; Greenway, 2008).

[15] The "Law on the Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent Persons" was passed in 2006, which established for the first time a new national dependency system and universal rights to public benefits for all dependent Spanish citizens.

undeclared workers from 7 May to 31 July 2011 during which employers can register employees, on one hand, and enhances substantially the penalties for infringement, on the other hand.

The high segmentation in the Spanish labor market reflects on the diversity between genders and age groups. Discrimination against women and youth in the Spanish labor market was very profound. Female economic activities began to grow dramatically since the late 1970s, concurrently with the economic modernization and Spain's deep integration in international markets. The rate of labor force participation among women aged 15-64 increased substantially from 15.8% in 1950 to 68.3% in 2013 and got much closer to the Western and Northern Europe (Banyuls et al., 2009). However, the gender gap endures in terms of the engagement in the labor market. In comparison to men, Spanish women nowadays still carry out a bulk of household chores and take the responsibility to care children and elderly. The active population among women has enhanced steadily since the 1980s, in both the economic prosperity and economic recession. The economic growth (between 1985 and 1991) signified higher labor demands and more employment opportunities for women. In the period of economic recession, more women went out from home and took part in the labor force to compensate for the loss of family income. However, unemployment among women increased dramatically and remained at a high level. The gender diversity in terms of unemployment rates kept increasing as well. Unemployment rates are disproportionately high among women relative to men because the growth in female labor participation mainly in temporary employment and part-time employment. In addition, the discrepancy in contract type is very persistent between genders. Access to the labor market by means of fixed-term contracts is widespread among young people. They suffer from employment insecurity and frequently move between unemployment and temporary work for quite a long time (Casal, 1999). The unemployment risk for people aged under 25 is still bleak (Banyuls et al., 2009). Access to the labor market by means of temporary contracts is widespread, but many young people also suffer from job insecurity, moving between unemployment and temporary employment for many years.

Spain's labor market is characterized by high levels of precariousness, for example, high (youth) unemployment, low job security, strong segmentation, high prevalence of temporary contracts, pervasively gender-based employment segregation. The prolonged co-residence of young adults with their parents arises as the optimal strategy to confront with their adverse labor market outcomes, which in turn affects their partnership and fertility behavior. Furthermore, the

soaring unemployment caused by the Great Recession forced more adults to move back in with their parents, most of them had a temporary or informal job with little protection and low layout payouts. Most importantly, children are significantly affected by the economic instability of the family and the inability of their parents to obtain a salary from the labor market. The fact that part-time and informal jobs are often concentrated among women with caring responsibilities in Spain (Fourage & Muffels, 2008) implies that earing inequality and high in-work poverty caused by the high prevalence of temporary employment make households with children a particularly vulnerable group.

5.3 Welfare state and family policy

The 1978 Spanish Constitution plays a crucial role in the establishment of the modern welfare state and the transformations of family. The Constitution explicitly states the social rights in terms of education, health, housing and pensions, which offered a legal framework for the modernization of the welfare state (Guillén & León, 2011, p61). It proclaims the equality between women and men in education, the labor market, and the family sphere, and eliminated women's legal subordinate role to men. And the 1978 Spanish constitution also radically altered the relationships between parents and children. Children born outside of wedlock were granted the same rights as children born in marriage.

Women's increasing participation in the labor market and higher education had the greatest impact on the development of family policy in Spain (de la Escosura & Sanz, 1996). The family policy began to be reformed from the 1980s. The primary measure was the extension of statutory maternity leave, from 12 to 14 weeks with 75% of the former income in 1980 (Wall & Escobedo, 2009). In the same year, an unpaid parental leave was granted to mothers and fathers until the child's third birthday, and reductions of working hours for children under 6 without economic compensation (Kamerman & Moss, 2009). In 1989, the length of maternity leave was extended to 16 weeks with full replacement rate (Act on the Extension of Maternity Leave). Although the parental leave was open to fathers, the deep impact of traditional gender roles and higher opportunity costs of men (the risk of losing the job and reduced income) led to a new form of gender inequality in the leave use. Under the recommendations or directives from the European Union, the statutory leaves for parents improved frequently in the 1990s. Then, the Act on the

Regulation of Parent and Maternity Leave clarified that fathers may take up to 10 weeks of the maternity leave period in 1995 (Escobedo, Meil Landwerlin, & Lapuerta, 2014). In 2007, the Gender Equality Law (*Ley Orgánica 3/2007, para la Igualdad efectiva de mujeres y hombres*) carried out a set of measures to improve the maternity, paternity, and parental leaves (Pérez-Caramés, 2014). Most importantly, the paternity leave scheme in Spain was introduced (Escobedo, Flaquer, & Navarro-Varas, 2012). Spanish fathers are entitled to fifteen days' leave with one hundred percent of previous earnings paid by the Social Security Fund. Although the 2007 legislation also committed to extend the paternity leave to four weeks, expected to be implemented from 1st January 2011, the measure was delayed due to the influence of current economic crisis until January 2017 (Escobedo, Flaquer, & Navarro-Varas, 2012; Farré & González, 2017). Moreover, the length of maternity is 16 weeks, with 100% replacement rates until a maximum limit of Euro 3,230 per month (Escobedo, Flaquer, & Navarro-Varas, 2012; Flaquer & Escobedo, 2014; Flaquer, Pfau-Effinger, & Artiaga Leiras, 2014).

The 1990 education reform (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*) also promoted the reconciliation of family and work for both parents by advancing the school entrance age to three (Meil Landwerlin, 2006). This Act included children from 0 to 6 into the education system, corresponding to the so-called "infant education" (*Educación infantil*), composed of two voluntary cycles (one for children younger than 3, and the other for children between 3 and 6). The goal of the universal coverage with early childhood education for children ages 3-6 was attained at the end of the 1990s (Jiménez, 2010), but the resources provided for the first cycle were far from sufficient. Between 1992 and 2006, the coverage of education for children under 3 years in full-time-based nursery schools (*escuelas infantiles 0-3*) enhanced from 4% to 17%, in which the private sector accounted for 57% (Baizán, 2009; Flaquer & Escobedo, 2009)[16]. The 2006 Spanish education law (Ley Orgánica de Educación), modified in 2013 by the Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa*)[17], entitled children ages 3-6 to free early childhood education. In 2009-2010, the enrolment rate of children aged 3-6 years in early childhood education and care (ECEC) reached 99% (Pérez-

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[16] During the 1990s, parents had access to income tax reductions that partially covered the cost of formal child care (Azmat & González, 2010). Moreover, private childcare centers to some extent received public subsidies (Baizán, 2009).

[17] The 2013 Law did not introduce any changes in the organization of early childhood education and care. The law concentrates on improving performance of students and curbing early school leaving.

Caramés, 2014), which was the second-highest among OECD countries. The participation rates of children under the age of 3 in ECEC more than doubled in the last decade, which has surpassed the EU-average (30.3% in 2014) (European commission 2015). In 2014, 34% of children aged 0-2 in Spain were cared for under formal arrangements[18] (Ministerio de Educación Cultura y Deporte, 2017), with more than half of them were publicly managed and funded (51.4%). It is noteworthy that the proportion of children under 3 in nonregulated childcare facilities, chiefly on an informal employment basis, remained high (over 20%) (Aguilar, Escobedo, & Montagut, 2011). This phenomenon can be interpreted by the increasing gap between demand — stem from the rise of maternal employment, and supply — consistently low coverage of formal early education for the under 3. On the one hand, public-funded institutions provide relatively high-quality and affordable childcare services but with limited slots available and have gap between open hours and parent's timetable. Moreover, the high costs of private childcare services restrict the access of many families, especially those with low income, to formal child care. On the other hand, the substantial growth in the involvement of women, in particular mothers, in the formal labor market further increases the demand for child care. Therefore, a relatively large share of childcare responsibility has been externalized to informal paid workers, usually non-professional external carers (e.g. female immigrant workers) or relied on the intergenerational solidarity among women (Fernández & Tobío, 2005; Flaquer & Escobedo, 2009). In addition, the strategy of transferring caring responsibilities to grandparents or other female relatives may no longer be applicable because they are more prone to stay in the labor market (Moreno & Marí-Klose, 2013). In consequence, the "care deficits" in Spanish families significantly contribute to sharp decrease of the fertility rates in Spain, thus, many families will end up having fewer children than they desired (Marí-Klose & Marí-Klose, 2006; Moreno & Marí-Klose, 2013). All these factors may also lead to inequality at the beginning of children's lives in Spain.

In sum, since the beginning of 1990s, Spain has been situated between corporatist continental welfare regime and the liberal Anglo-Saxon welfare regime, and then it turns toward Nordic social democratic one (Moreno, 2008). Despite the progress made in Spanish family policy during the recent decades, it is still relatively underdeveloped and "unfriendly" towards family and working

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[18] The coverage rates of early education for children under the age of three varied greatly across Autonomous Communities, from as high as 43.7% in Madrid to as low as 12% in Canarias. In addition, the rate also increased with age: 9.7% of children under 1; 35.6% of children aged 1; and 55.4% of children aged 2 (Ministerio de Educación Cultura y Deporte, 2017).

mothers given that the government puts provision of childcare facilities and services as the secondary goal. In the context of the ongoing crisis, families with children face greater challenges. First, skyrocketing unemployment during the crisis, especially among the young, put families with children under severe economic pressure. Second, budgets for families and children have been subjected to large cuts in the welfare domain that already unfriendly towards families. As a result, men and women may change their partnership (e.g. unmarried cohabitation, delayed marriages) and fertility behavior (e.g. postponement of childbirth and decrease in fertility), children with disadvantaged backgrounds may be additionally affected by the economic crisis.

5.4   Legal recognition of cohabitation

It was not until 1992 that unmarried cohabitation started to be taken seriously by the Constitutional Court of Spain (Ruiz, 2006). However, there is no legislation at the national level with regards to non-marital cohabitation. Owning to the inactive reaction of the national legislature to the growing prevalence of cohabitation, some autonomous communities have enacted the registered partnership to give cohabitors adequate protections (Asua González, 2014). Before taking a close look, we should get the basic knowledge about the constitutional system of Spain. The Spanish constitution establishes a system that recognizes two territorial levels of government: the central State and the autonomous communities. Overall, there are seventeen autonomous communities, including two cities with statuses of autonomy. Each autonomous community has political and financial autonomy, including the legislative power with relation to certain regional matters[19].

Catalonia was the pioneer in Spain in terms of the legal cognition of unmarried cohabiting couples. In 1998, the Catalan enacted the first regional partnership law (*de unions estables de parella*) to regulate the non-marital relationship between cohabiting couples and their rights. In fact, there are two civil acts passed in the same year on this issue: Act 10/1998 of 15th July, with regards to stable pair relationships, and Act 19/1998 of 28th December, with regards to cohabitation situations for mutual assistance (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2000). According to Art. 234-1 of the Catalan Civil Code, "two people who cohabit in a manner analogous to marriage qualify as a so-called stable couple in three circumstances: if cohabitation lasts for more than two

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[19] More information see:
http://en.administracion.gob.es/pag_Home/espanaAdmon/comoSeOrganizaEstado/ComunidadesAutonomas.html

years without interruption; or, the couple have a common child; or if the couple formalises their relationship by notarial deed". This law harmonizes the rights of cohabiting couples to the rights of spouses in terms of guardianship, incapacity, housing, or public benefits, and recognizes the compensatory and pension rights to the partner who gave up paid work for homemaking or taking care of family members, as well as it endows the rights of adoption to both homosexual and heterosexual cohabiting couples (Ruiz, 2004). It is noteworthy that the online registration of unmarried cohabitation (unions *estables de parella*) has become available in Catalonia recently.

The Catalan model was soon followed by other autonomous communities during the period from 1999 to 2003. Unmarried cohabitation (both heterosexual and homosexual) has been recognized as an institution by laws in the other ten Autonomous Communities (Ruiz, 2006) — Aragon in 1999 (Ley 6/1999, relativa a las parejas estables no casadas), Navarra in 2000 (Ley 6/2000, para la igualdad jurídica de las parejas estables), Valencia in 2001 (Ley 1/2001, reguladora de las uniones de hecho), the Balearic Islands in 2001 (Ley 18/2001, de parejas de estables), Madrid in 2001 (Ley 11/2011, de uniones de hecho de la Comunidad de Madrid), Asturias in 2002 (Ley 4/2002, de parejas estables), Andalusia in 2002 (Ley 5/2002, de parejas de hecho), the Canary Islands in 2003 (Ley 5/2003, sobre parejas de hecho), Extremadura in 2003 (Ley 5/2003, sobre parejas de hecho), the Basque Country in 2003 (Ley 2/2003, reguladora de las parejas de hecho del Pais Vasco).

Furthermore, the levels of legal regulations also vary across the eleven autonomous communities. On the one hand, for those autonomous communities where traditionally have their own civil regulations (foral law) — Aragón, Baleares, the Basque Country, Catalonia and Navarra, there is an established framework regarding rights and duties for unmarried cohabitors (Ruiz, 2006), which includes the financial rights and obligations during cohabitation, the rights after dissolution or one partner's death (Jones & Merino-Blanco, 2008). On the other hand, for those autonomous communities without such regulations—Andalucía, Asturias, Canarias, Extremadura, Madrid and Valencia, the legal regulations on cohabitation are rather brief and limited (Ruiz, 2006). As a result, the absence of a coherent law at the state level has led to a diversity in rights and obligations of unmarried cohabitors in different autonomous communities. As stated by Jones and Merino-Blanco (2008), the situation of cohabitors is "chaotic" due to the lack of a coherent law at the state level and variations across autonomous communities.

At the state level, the Constitutional Court does not provide a specific indication on the obligations and rights of cohabiting couples, but it developed an approach to define the rights of cohabitors — the principled pragmatism (Ruiz, 2004). Certainly, the logic underlying these legal provision treats cohabiting couples differently from spouses. The Supreme Court of Spain extends some marriage-like rights to cohabitors based on the principled pragmatism. Relying on the notion of "unjust enrichment", a cohabiting partner who had sacrificed a career to take care of children and family is granted compensatory and pension rights after union dissolution or death of the other partner. However, in the case of separation, the by-default common property regime of spouses is not applicable to unmarried cohabiting couples. Moreover, only married spouses can file income taxes jointly, although cohabitors can obtain certain tax deductions by forming a tax community with joint children. The public health insurance has been extended to unmarried partners who living with insured individuals in a relationship analogous to the conjugal relationship. Cohabitors do not automatically obtain the right to inherit. They are entitled to inherit their partner's estate only if specified in a will or an inheritance agreement (Asua González, 2014). The Law on Divorce extends the right of claiming the survivor's pension to unmarried cohabiting couples only if certain conditions are met (such as legal impediment to marry). Since 1994, a new Act on House Rental extends the rights to retain the family home in cases of union dissolution or death of one partner from married spouses to unmarried cohabitors, but under the condition that they had been living together as a couple for at least two years (Ruiz, 2004). The property disputes are resolved by referring to general property law, which greatly differ from married spouses. Unmarried fathers cannot automatically obtain parental rights as married fathers, so that extra steps should be taken to establish paternity. According to the Article 120 of the Spanish Civil Code, the establishment of filiation of unmarried parents is determined by: 1) recognition before the officer in charge of the Civil Registry; 2) resolution issued in proceedings processed in accordance with the legislation of the Civil Registry; 3) court order; 4) In respect of the mother, where maternal filiation should be provided in the registration of birth performed within the requisite period, in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Registry Law. In sum, the legal recognition of non-marital cohabitation at the State level has been reluctant, slow, and limited in Spain. Likewise, the legal harmonization between cohabiting couples and spouses in terms of rights and duties is also very limited. Married couples still enjoy a more favorable legal position relative to cohabiting couples.

5.5   Cultural changes in gender and family attitudes

Changes in attitudes toward family issues in combination with secularization were suggested to be the major driving force behind the shifts in family formation and fertility (Lesthaeghe & Meekers, 1986; Van de Kaa, 1987; Lesthaeghe & Surkuyn, 1988). The diffusion of post-materialist norms and values that highlight self-fulfillment, together with shifting attitudes toward family, marriage and parenthood, contribute to the dramatic changes in family behavior.

Cultural norms, social values and attitudes have experienced radical transformations in Spain. At the end of Franco's regime, the tourism boom and the migration of Spain's workers to Western and Northern European countries had the most powerful influences on Spanish social values. Both tourists and returning Spaniards brought the liberal ideas and values from France, West Germany, the UK into Spain. Moreover, the increase in women's education and labor force participation, as well as the legalization of divorce, contraception, and abortion lead to considerable changes in cultural values and social norms.

Corresponding with the transformation from dictatorship to democracy, attitudes toward family and gender roles in Spain were revolutionized as well. During the Franco era, "machismo" was highly dominant in social and political views (Philips, 2010), for example, the legal system did not recognize women's rights (Moore, 2006), moral codes told women to be a good wife and a good mother, limited women's opportunities to pursue personal achievements were available, and social policies mainly protected male earners rather than women. After the end of Franco's dictatorship, the Constitution of 1978 proclaimed the legal equality between men and women, which marked a turning point in the promotion of gender equality (Jones, 1997; Carrasco & Rodríguez, 2000). The public opinions as well as personal attitudes toward non-traditional family forms, gender roles, and other personal lifestyles, have become more liberal in Spain. According to statistics from the ISSP (1994), the majority of Spanish young people expressed very high tolerance of non-traditional living arrangements, so that 80% of them believed that "non-marital cohabitation is acceptable" compared to 88% in Sweden and 67% in Italy. Moreover, people tend to have less traditional views toward sex roles. For example, 33.6% of Spaniards agreed that "a man's job is to earn money, a woman's job is to look after the home and family" compared to 22.4% in Sweden and 41.6% in Portugal. As a result of the Spanish transition to democracy there has

been a dramatic shift in social attitudes. A process of rapid secularization and individualization has led to intense changes in public and personal attitudes toward family issues as well as shifts in gender equality, tolerance, and roles of marriage and family in contemporary Spanish society.

Mynarska and Bernardi (2007) suggested that there are four ideational changes that result in the growing diffusion of cohabitation: first, self-realization raises individuals' expectations as regards the quality of the intimate relationship; second, the attraction of formal marital commitment is reduced due to higher individualism; third, secularization has decreased the public meaning and religious significance of the wedding ceremony; fourth, the liberalization of social norms and the growing acceptance of different union forms have weakened direct normative pressure. Hence, ideational transitions with regards to family issues reflect on two major approaches: attitudes toward different union patterns and gender ideology.
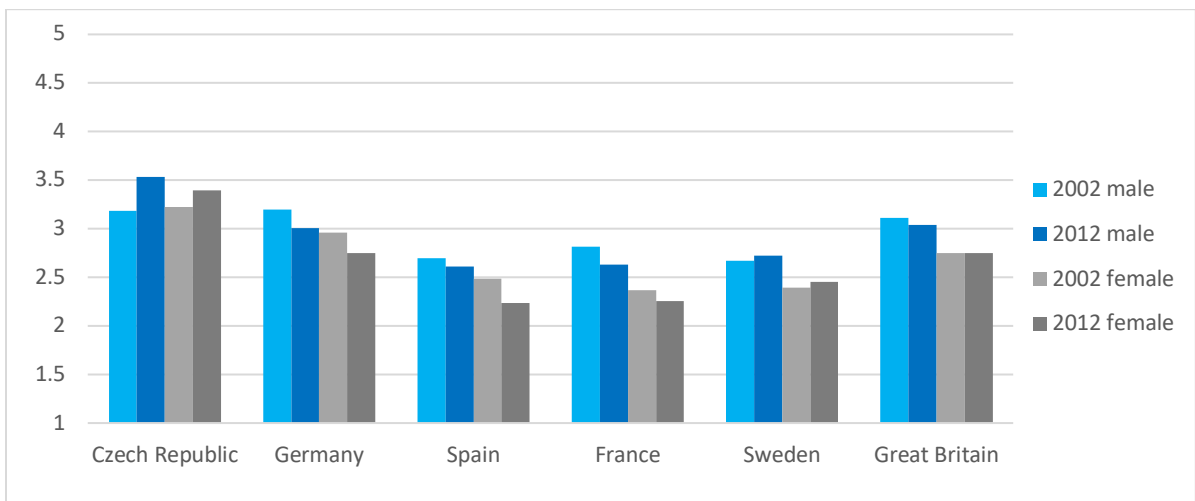
Figure 5.3: Mean approval of the statement "married people are happier than unmarried people" by gender in 2002 and 2012 (scale:1-5)

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2002; International Social Survey Programme 2012.
Note: The ISSP data only refer to Great Britain not the UK.

Figure 5.3 compares men's and women's attitudes toward marriage, demonstrated by the mean approval of the statement "to what extent do you agree or disagree that married people are generally happier than unmarried people". In France, Germany, Spain, and Great Britain, both women and men were less likely to agree that married people are happier and more satisfied than unmarried people in 2012 than in 2002. By contrast, in the Czech Republic and Sweden, people increasingly believed that marriage makes people happier. More importantly, the mean approval

of people who agreed with this statement in Spain was very close to that in France and Sweden where de facto unions are widespread. In 2012, the average agreement among women in Spain was even lower than their counterparts in France and Sweden.
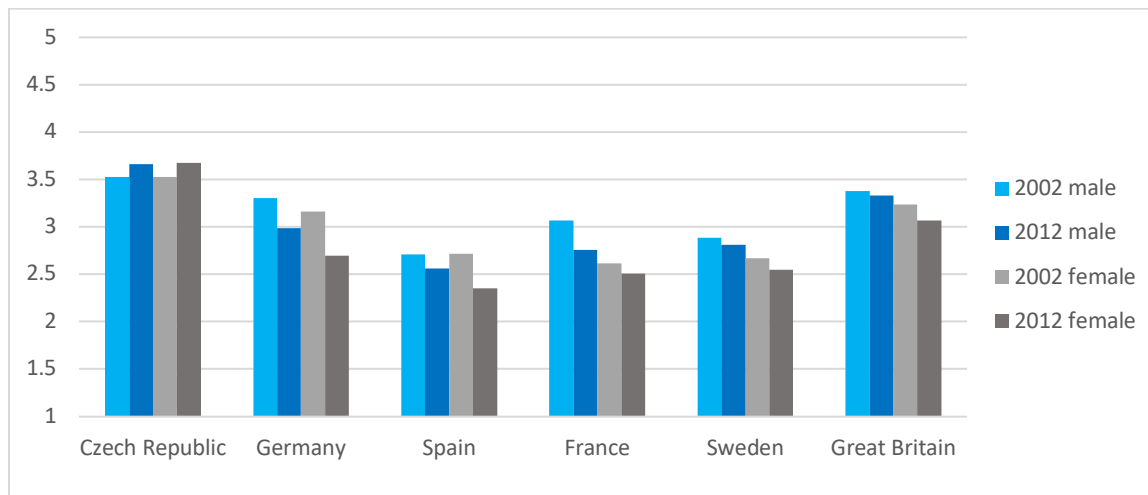
Figure 5.4: Mean approval of the statement "people who want children ought to get married" by gender in 2002 and 2012 (scale:1-5)

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2002; International Social Survey Programme 2012.
Note: The ISSP data only refer to Great Britain not the UK.

Attitudes toward the relationship between marriage and parenthood have changed over time as well (Figure 5.4). In Germany, Spain, France, Sweden, and Great Britain, both women and men have become less convinced that marriage should precede childbearing. Children born outside of marriage have been growingly acceptable for the majority of people. It is to be noted that both men and women in Spain were more likely to hold more positive attitudes toward extramarital births than in the other nations. Furthermore, attitudes toward the association between marriage and parenthood vary markedly between men and women. In general, women hold more liberal attitudes toward childbearing outside of marriage than men do.
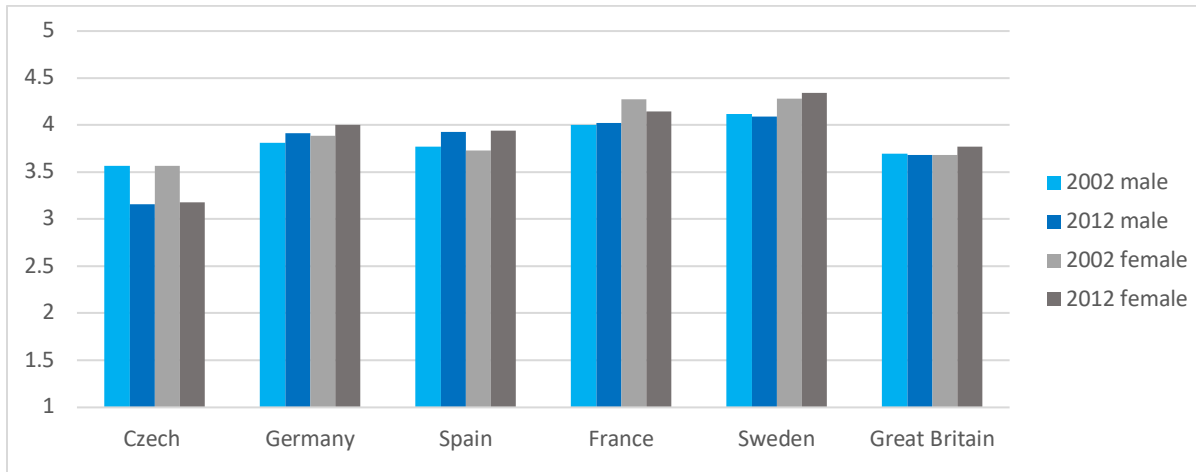
Figure 5.5: Mean approval of the statement "it is all right for a couple to live together without intending to get married" by gender in 2002 and 2012 (scale:1-5)

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2002; International Social Survey Programme 2012.
Note: The ISSP data only refer to Great Britain not the UK.

The growing approval of non-traditional union status dovetails with shifts in family living arrangements and a general liberalization of attitudes. Individuals are more agreeable to new family forms along with the prevalence of cohabitation. Figure 5.5 illustrates the comparison between women's and men's attitudes toward unmarried cohabitation in the six European countries in 2002 and 2012. Support for cohabitation remained high in most of the selected countries between the two time points. Nevertheless, people's attitudes toward unmarried cohabitation vary across countries, which are positively associated with the prevalence of cohabitation. For example, in Spain where the general cohabitation rates are comparatively low, the degree of mean approval of cohabitation tends to be lower than that in Sweden where non-marital cohabitation is a more common arrangement for couples. More importantly, the level of growth in supportive attitudes toward cohabiting unions among Spaniards was higher compared with other countries. In fact, the level of acceptance, on average, of cohabitation even slightly decreased among men in the Czech Republic and Sweden and among women in the Czech Republic and France.

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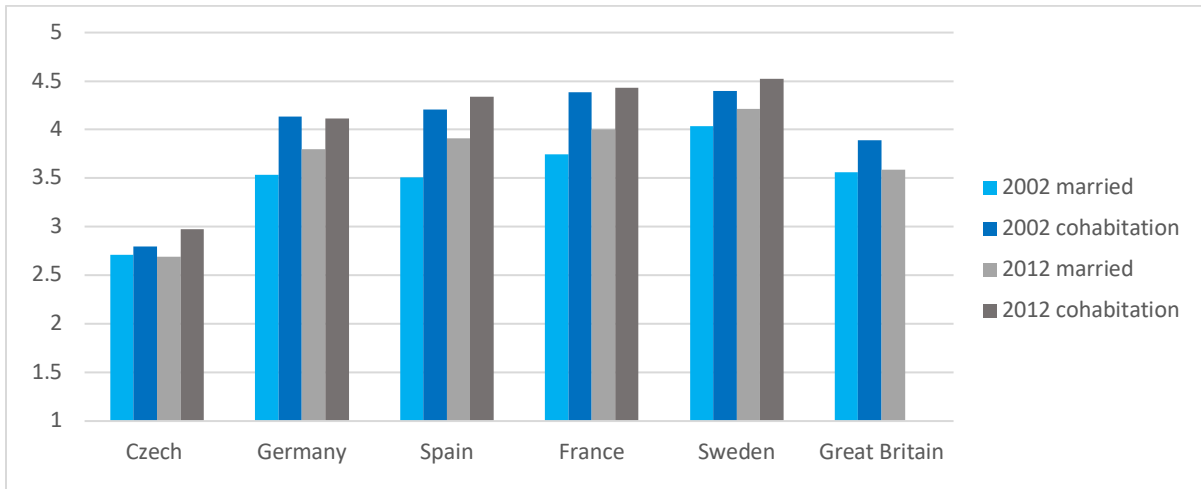
Figure 5.6: Mean approval of the statement "men's job is to earn money, women's job is to look after the home" by union status in 2002 and 2012 (scale:1-5)

Source: International Social Survey Programme 2002; International Social Survey Programme 2012.
Note: The information concerning living arrangements is not available for Great Britain in 2012.

Previous research suggests that cohabitors' attitudes toward gender division of labor are more egalitarian, while married people are more likely to hold traditional gender ideologies. Figure 5.6 shows the mean approval of the statement "men's job is to earn money; women's job is to look after the home" among cohabiting and married couples in 2002 and 2012. Higher scores indicate more egalitarian gender role attitudes. There is a high expression of egalitarian gender role attitudes in the majority of the nations except for the Czech Republic. In general, cohabitors are more agreeable to egalitarian gender role attitudes than married people. Nevertheless, the degree of change in attitudes is higher among married people than cohabitors. For example, in Spain, the average increase in approval of egalitarian gender attitudes among cohabitors was 0.13 points between 2002 and 2012 compared to 0.41 points among married people. Moreover, the distribution of gender ideology varies across countries. The levels of cohabitation diffusion have a positive relationship with the egalitarian gender ideologies. For example, both cohabitors and married people living in Sweden (4.52 points among cohabitors and 4.21 points among married people in 2012) and France (4.43 points among cohabitors and 4 points among married people in 2012) were more likely to agree with the egalitarian division of labor in the household than their counterparts in the Czech Republic (2.97 points among cohabitors and 2.69 points among married people). It is noteworthy that in Spain the level of rise in approval of egalitarian gender roles among married people and cohabitors was higher than in most countries. The statistics showed that 89.99% of

cohabitors and 86.31% of married people support egalitarian division of labor between men and women in Spain, which were even higher than those in some Nordic countries such as Norway and Finland in 2012 (not shown in the figure).

Overall, a high level of tolerance and acceptance of "atypical" family forms and childbearing outside of marriage has become widespread in Spain. In addition, more egalitarian and liberal attitudes toward gender roles have gradually and significantly replaced the traditional or patriarchal ones. The shifts in cultural values and attitudes imply that religious precepts and traditional family norms are no longer barriers to the spread of non-traditional family forms in Spain. However, some scholars argued that "the strong family and familism have not changed very much over the past few decades in Southern Europe" (Dalla Zuanna, & Micheli, 2004, p15), in that "familism is not a general attitude toward the 'traditional family', based on marriage and children, with bread-winner father and the housewife", and therefore, it "can persist even where traditional family-life declines" (Dalla Zuanna, 2001, p140). The familistic oriented society discourages young adults' early departure from the parental household. Moreover, the welfare system in Spain (and other South European countries) is deeply steeped in familism as well, indicating that the welfare regime presumes that the family is primarily responsible for the well-being of its members rather than the State. The major problem of this regime is that young people and couples with children are highly overlooked, most of the public spending go directly to the aged, financing pensions. As a result, consistently high unemployment rates, labor market segmentation, precarious and unstable job positions, high housing costs, the scarcity of public support, strong family and familism, all these factors more or less account for the wide gap between dramatic changes in attitudes and values toward gender and family and relatively low prevalence of cohabitation and childbearing out of wedlock in Spain.

Chapter 6 Family transformations in Spain

6.1 Introduction

During the Second Demographic Transition, families in Western countries have experienced sharp transformations involving intimate relationships, fertility behavior, and living arrangements of children. The growing separation of sexual intercourse, marriage, and childbearing, together with changes in individuals' characteristics and socio-economic environments, have important consequences for the patterns and the timing of partnership formation and fertility. Marriage rates have swiftly decreased, and the age of first marriages has climbed steadily. With the persistent delay in marriage, entry into motherhood has been postponed and fertility rates have been markedly reduced. The decrease and delay of marriage have also been accompanied by the prevalence of cohabitation. Nowadays, cohabitation has become a normative living arrangement with high levels of acceptance and practice across Europe (Liefbroer & Fokkema, 2008). The majority of first unions are formed through unmarried cohabitation, fewer couples get married directly (Sobotka & Toulemon, 2008; Billari & Liefbroer, 2010).

In addition, divorce rates have risen in nearly all European countries since the 1960s. Divorce remained morally charged and relatively rare in most parts of Europe until the last quarter of the 20th century (Allan et al., 2001). Shifts in legislation, social norms, and attitudes facilitated a significant growth in divorce rates. Moreover, considering that cohabiting unions have a substantially higher risk of dissolution than married unions (Dronkers, 2016), intimate relationships have become increasingly instable in recent decades. Furthermore, as a result of rising divorce and separation rates, repartnering (including remarriage and cohabitation) has become growingly important in understanding the dynamics of union formations.

This chapter attempts to provide an overview of trends in patterns of partnership formation (marriage and unmarried cohabitation) and dissolution, as well as fertility behavior in Spain and compare it with other European countries in different stages of cohabitation diffusion. The first part demonstrates changes in family formation patterns and reproduction behavior in Spain, especially the evolution of cohabiting unions and the socioeconomic and demographic profiles of cohabitors, in order to enquire about the potential impact of cohabitation on child well-being. The second part presents some descriptive indicators regarding trends in family formation including

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marriage and cohabitation, the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of cohabitors across a range of European nations over time. The third part shows the evolution of fertility behavior, and the incidence of childbearing outside of marriage. In the final two parts, some basic descriptive statistics of cross-national differences in partnership dissolution and repartnering have been displayed and the potential determinants are discussed respectively in order to provide a general picture of family changes in Spain compared with other European countries.

6.2 Evolution of cohabitation in Spain

Until the late 1990s the dramatic transformations in Spanish families were not accompanied by a significant diffusion of non-marital cohabitation, as it had earlier occurred in many other European countries. This phenomenon is usually described as a "paradox", characterized by the coexistence of very low fertility and low diffusion of unmarried cohabitation in the Mediterranean countries (Dalla Zuanna, & Micheli, 2004). According to the Second Demographic Transition theory, the sharp decline in reproduction can be seen as a consequence of modernity and ideational changes, together with shifts in family formation patterns. In Scandinavian countries, for example, the drop in fertility happened at a pace similar to the diffusion of cohabitation and nonmarital childbearing (Cantisani & Dalla Zuanna, 1999). However, families in Spain did not follow the same trajectory. The substantial fall in birth rates went along with a late and slow spread of unmarried cohabitation (Muñoz-Pérez & Recaño-Valverde, 2011). In 1985, only 1.1% Spanish women who aged 15-49 were living together with a partner outside of marriage at the time of survey (INE, *Encuesta de fecundidad 1985*), compared to 12.4% of women in France (aged 20-44) for the same period. Fifteen years later, the share of cohabitation was still low so that only 6.9% of women aged 15-49 were cohabiting in 1999 (INE, *Encuesta de fecundidad 1999*). On the contrary, the total fertility rates fell considerably from 2.88 in 1974 to 1.17 in 1999 so that Spain became one of the countries with a lowest-low fertility.

It was not until the beginning of the 2000s that cohabitation became more prevalent in Spain (Muñoz-Pérez & Recaño-Valverde, 2011). According to census data, the proportion of women in union aged 15-49 reported cohabiting at the time of survey was 9.07% in 2001 compared to 25.3% of women in France at the same age group. In the overall population, the percentage of cohabitation among all partnered people was even lower (5.93%). Since then, cohabiting unions have become

more widespread. The share of women in cohabiting unions was more than doubled in 2011 (23.53%) compared to 40.49% in Sweden and 13.02% in Italy. A more recent survey *Encuesta Continua de Hogares* carried out in 2015 by INE shows that 24.1% women aged 15-49 were cohabiting with their partner out-of-wedlock.

Table 6.1: The percentage of cohabiting women among all partnered women by age groups in Spain

		Total (15-49)	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49
Encuesta de Fecundidad								
	1985	1.1	2.1	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.8
	1999	6.9	34.0	15.3	7.2	5.1	2.4	3.0
Census data	2001	9.1	38.0	18.7	10.1	6.8	4.9	3.7
	(% never-married)		(96.2)	(89.7)	(75.4)	(57.1)	(44.6)	(36.4)
	2011	22.5	62.8	49.0	30.5	19.4	13.1	9.16
Encuesta Continua de Hogares								
	2015	24.1	68.7	55.8	34.8	22.9	15.7	10.1
	(% never-married)		(99.2)	(97.0)	(94.5)	(83.7)	(70.7)	(59.1)

Source: INE, *Encuesta de Fecundidad*, 1985 and 1999; Eurostat, *The Census* 2001 and 2011; INE, *Encuesta Continua de Hogares*, 2015.
Notes: The earliest available data on the detailed characteristics of cohabitors in Spain is from the *Encuesta de Fecundidad 1985*. However, this survey focused only on women aged 15-49. Hence, in order to keep the data comparable and understand the evolution of cohabitation in Spain, this table only concentrates on women aged 15-49.

Table 6.1 presents the distribution of partnered women reported as cohabiting by age groups. The share of women living in a cohabiting union increased in all age groups, but the earliest and highest rise occurred among women aged 20-24, from 2.1% in 1985 to 68.7% in 2015. Although cohabitation is quite prevalent among partnered women younger than 25 years old, it also shows a trend of delay in partnership formation. Furthermore, the composition of cohabitors in terms of marital status shifted over time and varied significantly by age group. Cohabitation at older ages is more likely to have a marriage prior to cohabitation. For instance, 36.4% of cohabitors aged 45-49 were never-married compared to 96.2% of cohabitors aged 20-24 in 2001. Likewise, 59.1% of cohabitors aged 45-49 were never-married relative to 99.2% of cohabitors aged 20-24 in 2015. Nevertheless, the proportion of never-married cohabiting women has substantially increased over time, especially in older age groups, for example, the proportion of never-married women among cohabitors aged 40-44 increased by one third from 2001 to 2015. Therefore, unmarried

cohabitation has increasingly become a common living arrangement for young couples. Among women at older ages, cohabitation used to be adopted after the dissolution of the previous marriage, which might be taken as an alternative to remarriage from the beginning of the diffusion of cohabitation in society. However, the substantial growth in the share of never-married cohabitors among women at older age implies that the diffusion of cohabitation may partly account for the delay and decline of marriage nowadays.
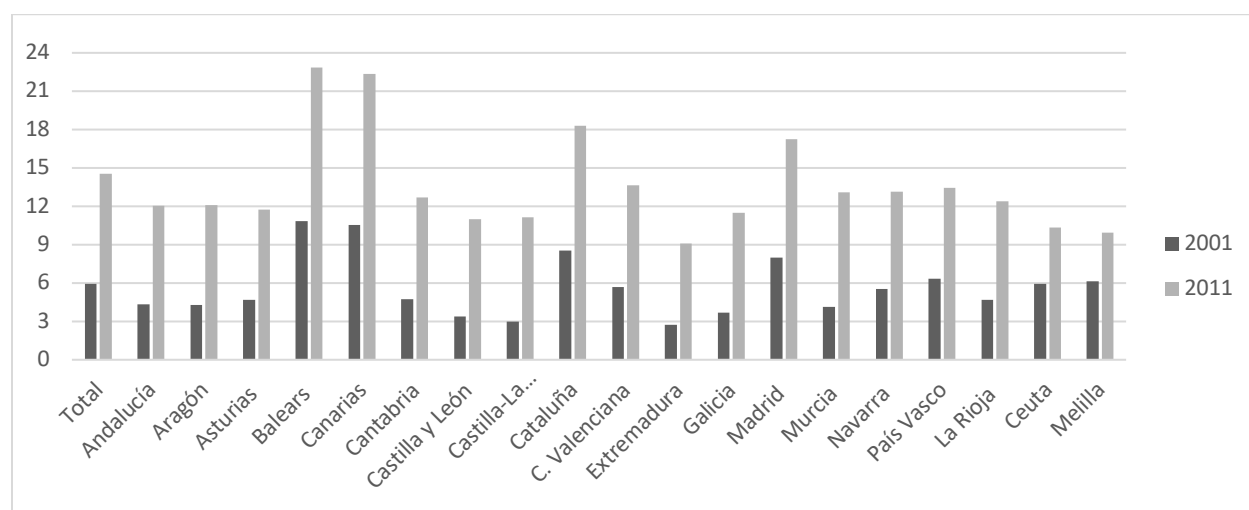
Figure 6.1: Percentage of cohabitors among all partnered people by Autonomous Communities in 2001 and 2011

Source: The Population and Housing Census 2001 and 2011 (INE)

The prevalence of cohabitation varies greatly by regions (Autonomous Communities) in Spain. (Meil Landwerlin, 2003). Data from the 2001 Census shows that cohabiting unions were more prevalent in Madrid (8.0%), Catalonia (8.5%), Baleares (10.8%), while they were quite rare in Extremadura (2.7%), Castilla-La Mancha (3.0%), Castilla y Leon (3.4%). A decade later, the proportion of unmarried cohabitation has substantially risen in all Autonomous Communities, ranging from 9.1% in Extremadura to more than 22% in the two archipelagos. In general, regional diversity is still very apparent. A greater rise in the cohabitation rate between 2001 and 2011 has been observed in regions where cohabitation was already quite prevalent, such as Balears (increased by 12.0 percentage points), Canarias (by 11.8 percentage points), Madrid (by 9.3 percentage points), and Catalonia (by 9.7 percentage points).

Table 6.2: Distribution (%) of socio-economic characteristics of married and cohabiting men by age group in 2001 and 2011

		2001		2011	
		married	cohabiting	married	cohabiting
15-29 years (100)		72.3	27.7	38.1	61.9
Education	<=primary	22.0	21.7	17.0	15.9
	lower secondary	41.4	35.9	35.4	35.2
	upper secondary	31.8	35.7	26.5	24.7
	tertiary	4.8	6.8	21.1	24.3
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Employment	employed	84.8	75.8	67.7	64.0
	unemployed	7.2	9.9	25.6	28.0
	inactive	8.1	14.3	6.7	7.9
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
30-49 years (100)		93.3	6.8	79.4	20.6
Education	<=primary	23.9	19.7	11.7	10.2
	lower secondary	33.5	30.5	31.9	28.5
	upper secondary	32.8	38.1	23.0	25.4
	tertiary	9.8	11.8	33.5	35.9
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Employment	employed	86.2	77.4	79.3	71.8
	unemployed	5.3	10.0	16.5	22.6
	inactive	8.5	12.6	4.1	5.5
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
50-64 years (100)		97.8	2.2	93.5	6.5
Education	<=primary	48.5	39.9	23.7	21.4
	lower secondary	26.4	25.0	35.2	30.3
	upper secondary	18.9	25.0	18.0	22.1
	tertiary	6.2	10.1	23.1	26.1
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Employment	employed	65.7	61.0	61.2	56.4
	unemployed	6.0	10.9	14.4	22.7
	inactive	28.3	28.1	24.4	21.0
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)

Source: Census data 2001 from IPUMS; Census data 2011 from Eurostat.

Table 6.2 presents the distribution of educational attainment and employment status of married and cohabiting men aged 15-64 (working age defined by Eurostat) in 2001 and 2011. Cohabiting men had higher educational attainments than married men in all age groups in both 2001 and 2011. For instance, among men aged 30-49, the proportion of those with tertiary education was 35.9% of cohabiting women in comparison with 33.5% of married men in 2011. The remarkable expansion of university education benefits both cohabiting and married men, and the advantage in educational attainments of cohabiting men remained. Nevertheless, Spanish men tended to attain lower in education than women did, 32.3% of cohabiting men and 28.9% of married ones had a tertiary education in 2011, compared with 39% of cohabiting women and 29.5% of married women (not shown in tables). Most importantly, the differentials in labor force participation by union status are obvious and show an opposite trend to education. Married men have a higher likelihood of being employed than cohabiting men, and cohabiting men have higher risks of unemployment than married men in all age groups in both 2001 and 2011.

As shown in Table 6.3, cohabiting women had higher educational attainments than married ones in all age groups both in 2001 and 2011. For instance, among women aged 30-49, the proportion of those with tertiary education was 43.3% of cohabiting women in comparison with 38.1% of married women in 2011. Moreover, Spain has experienced substantial improvements in the educational levels of women between 2001 and 2011. Among women aged 15-29, for example, the proportion of married women with tertiary education rose from 6.7% in 2001 to 28.3% in 2011, and the percentage of cohabiting women with tertiary education increased from 8.6% to 35.7%. As employment is concerned, married women (45.7% of them in the age group 30-49 in 2001 and 11.7% in 2011 were inactive) were more likely to be inactive compared with cohabiting women (30.2% in 2001 and 8.3% in 2011). Moreover, among women who were active in the labor market, cohabitors (86.1% in 2001 and 70.9% in 2011) have higher probabilities of being employed than married ones (82.9% in 2001 and 64.9% in 2011). However, the growth in the labor market participation was greater among married mothers than among cohabiting mothers. It is important to note that women's incorporation in the labor market has been partly via unemployment due to the high overall unemployment rates in Spain, which particularly concentrates on women and young adults.

Table 6.3: Distribution (%) of socio-economic characteristics of married and cohabiting women by age group in 2001 and 2011

		2001		2011	
		married	cohabiting	married	cohabiting
15-29 years (100)		77.2	22.8	47.7	52.3
Education	<=primary	17.2	15.9	15.9	11.1
	lower secondary	37.3	33.5	28.9	28.7
	upper secondary	38.9	42.0	26.9	24.5
	tertiary	6.7	8.6	28.3	35.7
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Employment	employed	48.6	54.5	48.4	57.6
	unemployed	13.7	14.8	35.1	31.5
	inactive	37.7	30.7	16.5	10.8
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
30-49 years (100)		94.0	6.0	82.2	17.8
Education	<=primary	25.8	19.8	10.5	8.7
	lower secondary	34.6	29.1	28.7	23.6
	upper secondary	31.1	38.0	22.6	24.4
	tertiary	8.5	13.1	38.1	43.3
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Employment	employed	45.0	57.3	60.1	65.0
	unemployed	9.3	12.5	28.1	26.7
	inactive	45.7	30.2	11.7	8.3
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
50-64 years (100)		98.2	1.8	94.7	5.3
Education	<=primary	60.6	53.7	29.7	25.1
	lower secondary	26.0	24.5	38.2	31.8
	upper secondary	11.2	17.7	15.6	20.3
	tertiary	2.3	4.1	16.4	22.8
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Employment	employed	23.0	33.9	40.7	47.5
	unemployed	4.2	6.9	20.2	21.9
	inactive	72.8	59.2	39.1	30.6
		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)

Source: Census data 2001 from IPUMS; Census data 2011 from Eurostat

Table 6.4: Distribution (%) of births by maternal union status, 2007-2014

Union status	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Married	69.8	66.9	65.5	64.5	62.7	61.1	59.2	57.5
Cohabiting	22.9	24.9	25.7	26.0	27.9	28.6	29.9	30.8
Single	7.3	8.3	8.8	9.5	9.4	10.3	10.9	11.7

Source: INE, Vital Statistics. Self-calculated.
Note: Detailed information on unmarried mothers' living arrangements was not available in the Vital Statistics in Spain until 2007.

Table 6.4 displays the percentage of newborns of married, cohabiting, and single mothers between 2007 and 2014. Over time, children are more likely to be born outside of marriage in Spain. More specifically, the growth of nonmarital births is due to births to cohabiting mothers rather than single mothers. The increase in the percentage of births to cohabiting mothers (from 22.9% in 2007 to 30.8% in 2014) was greater than the rise in the share of births to single mothers (from 7.3% in 2007 to 11.7% in 2014). On the contrary, the proportion of births to married mothers kept decreasing, from 69.8% in 2007 to 57.5% in 2014. In addition, the prevalence of births to cohabiting mothers increased among all age groups between 2007 and 2014 (Figure 6.2).
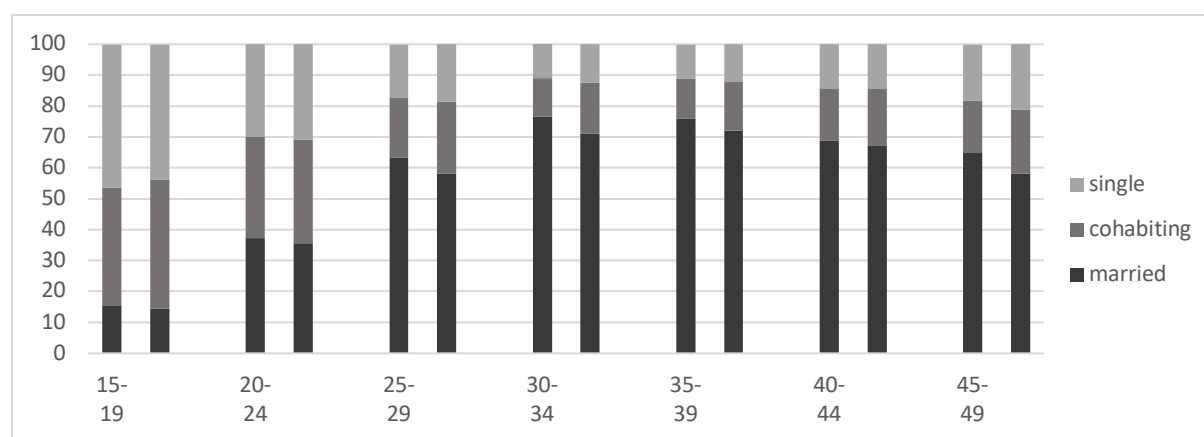
Figure 6.2: Percentages of newborns of married, cohabiting, and single mothers by age group in 2007 (left bars) and 2014 (right bars)
Source: INE, Vital Statistics

6.3   Trends in union formation in Spain compared to other European countries

The institution of marriage has undergone profound changes in recent decades (Billari, 2005). The decline in marriage rates has been accompanied by the tendency to defer the age of first marriages

due to the economic instability and a general extension of the period of education or training. In 1975, the average age at first marriage for women was in the age group 20-24 years in most European nations, then it increased to somewhere from 25 to 29 years in 1995. Furthermore, there has been for long a significant diversity in marriage ages in different countries. The highest values were recorded in the Nordic countries and the lowest values were found in the Eastern European countries (Kiernan, 2000). Marriage is no longer a prerequisite for residential independence and establishment of a new family, but it has become instead a capstone achievement for couples. In addition, the decline in marriage rates and the increase in average age at first marriage are associated with the emergence of widespread non-traditional living arrangements, including unmarried cohabitation.
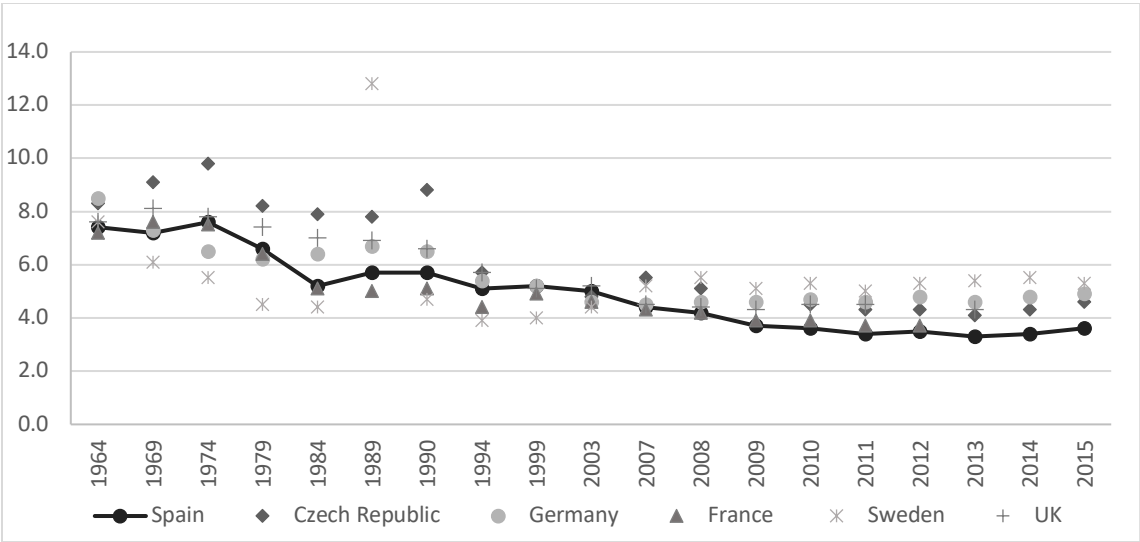
Figure 6.3: Crude marriage rates in six European countries (per 1000 persons)
Source: Eurostat

The retreat from marriage is reflected in the decline in marriage rates. Crude marriage rates, defined as the number of marriages per 1000 persons during the year, differ considerably across European nations since the late 1960s and the early 1970s (Figure 6.3). The decline in crude marriage rates started in Sweden in the late 1960s, then in other Nordic countries, later on spread through most of Western European countries in the early 1970s, to the Southern European countries in the mid-1970s and finally to the Eastern European countries in 1990s. Rates of marriage continued to fall in almost all countries. In Spain, for instance, crude marriage rates more

than halved between 1964 and 2013, from 7.4 marriages per 1000 persons in the former to 3.3 in the latter. Only Sweden has witnessed the rise of crude marriage rates since mid-1990s, from 3.9 marriages per 1000 persons in 1994 to 5.5 in 2014. In 2015, the lowest crude marriage rates among the six European countries were reported in Spain (3.6 marriages per 1000 persons), and the highest was in Sweden (5.3 marriages per 1000 persons). This data suggests that patterns of marriage formation may accord with the argument of "a return to 'more family'" posited by Esping-Andersen and Billari (2015, p2) that the "'less family' trend was transitory rather than a harbinger of a new era".
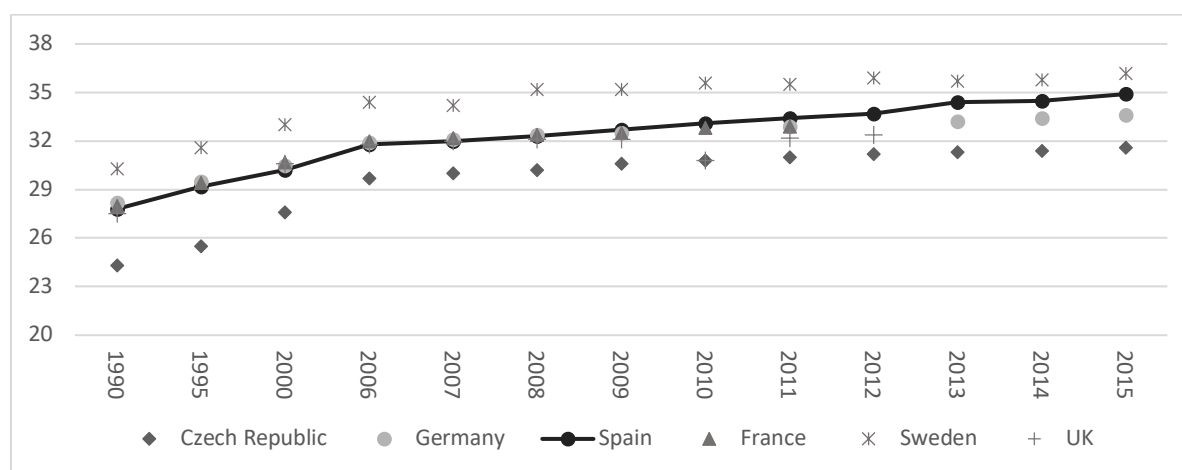
Figure 6.4: Mean age at first marriage of males in six European countries
Source: Data for the UK from OECD Family Database; for the rest countries from Eurostat.
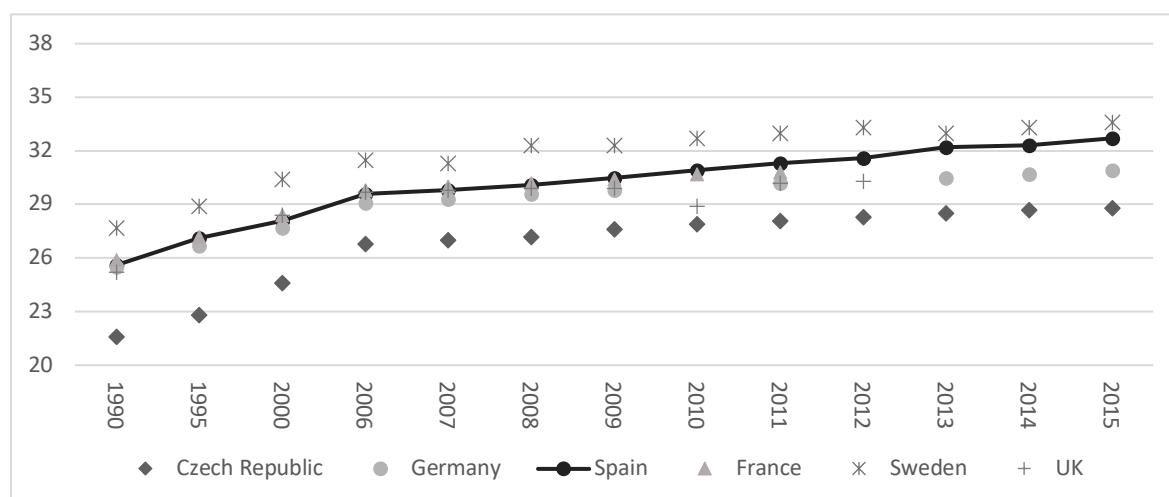
Figure 6.5: Mean age at first marriage of females in six European countries
Source: Data for the UK from OECD Family Database; for the rest countries from Eurostat.

Moreover, diminishing crude marriage rates have been accompanied by a growth in the mean age at first marriage (Figure 6.4 and 6.5). The mean age at first marriage for men was higher than for men in all countries. In 1990, the average mean age of the six selected countries at first marriage for men was 27.7 years and for women was 25.3 years. By 2015, the average mean age for men and women had increased by around 6 years respectively. Nevertheless, there remains a significant diversity between nations in the ages of never-married individuals in marriage. In Sweden, the mean age at first marriage for females reaches as high as 33.6 and for males as 36.2 in 2015, which was the highest among the six countries. By contrast, in the Czech Republic the mean age at first marriage was 28.8 for women and 31.6 for men. More importantly, the highest increase in the marriage age was recorded in Spain, where the mean age at marriage for single women and men had increased by 7.1 years respectively between 1990 and 2015. The diversity between countries in terms of the average age of first marriage reflects patterns of partnership and family formation at different stages and implies variations in the role that cohabitation plays in postponement and decrease of marriage. It is noteworthy that Sweden and Spain seem to be leaders in the late first marriage age in recent decade, but the underlying reasons for the postponement of first marriage are quite different. In Sweden, the majority of first marriages have been preceded by a long period of cohabitation, while in Spain, the late home-leaving among young adults greatly accounts for the delay of first marriage.
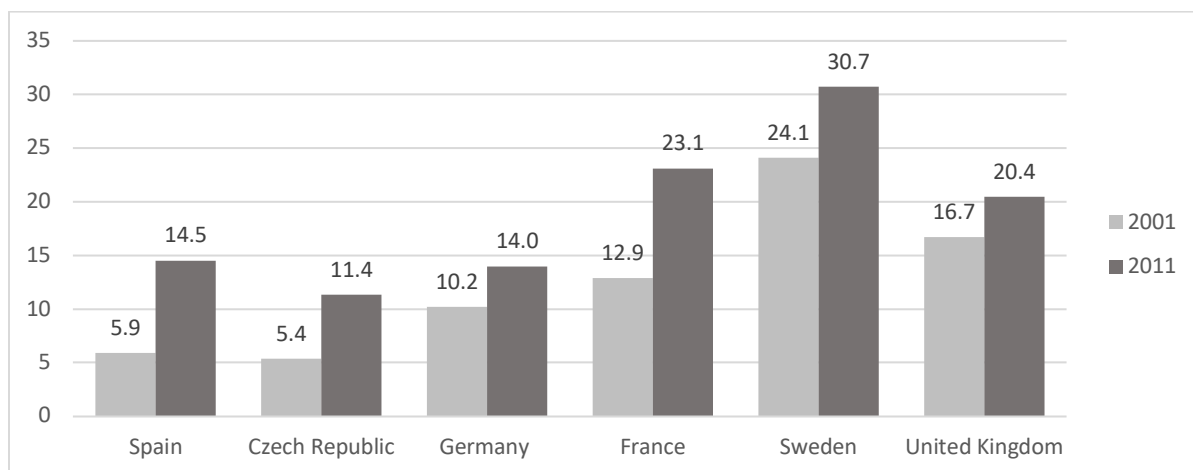
Figure 6.6: Percentage of cohabitors among all partnered people in six European countries in 2001 and 2011

Source: Data for the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, France and the UK from the Census 2001 and 2011 (Eurostat); Sweden from the ISSP 2002.

In many countries, the reduction and delay in marriage have also been accompanied by the increase of unmarried cohabiting unions. A growing share of couples live together without getting married and see cohabitation as a common arrangement for family formation. Figure 6.6 demonstrates that proportions of cohabitation vary widely in Europe, from as low as 11% in the Czech Republic to as high as 31% in Sweden in 2011. In comparison to 2001, all studied countries have experienced growth in their cohabitation rates, but the discrepancy between nations remains high. In Spain, the percentage of cohabitation had more than doubled from 6% in 2001 to 15% in 2011. Moreover, the growth of cohabitation in Spain was much greater than in other countries, for example, in Sweden from 24% in 2001 to 31% in 2011, in Germany from 10% to 14%, in France from 13% to 23%, and in the UK from 17% to 20%. Despite the rapid and dramatic rise in cohabitation, the prevalence of this living arrangement in Spain (14.5%) was still lower than in most Northern and Western European countries, such as in Sweden (30.7%), France (23.1%), and the UK (20.4%), but higher than Germany (14%) and the Czech Republic (11.4%).
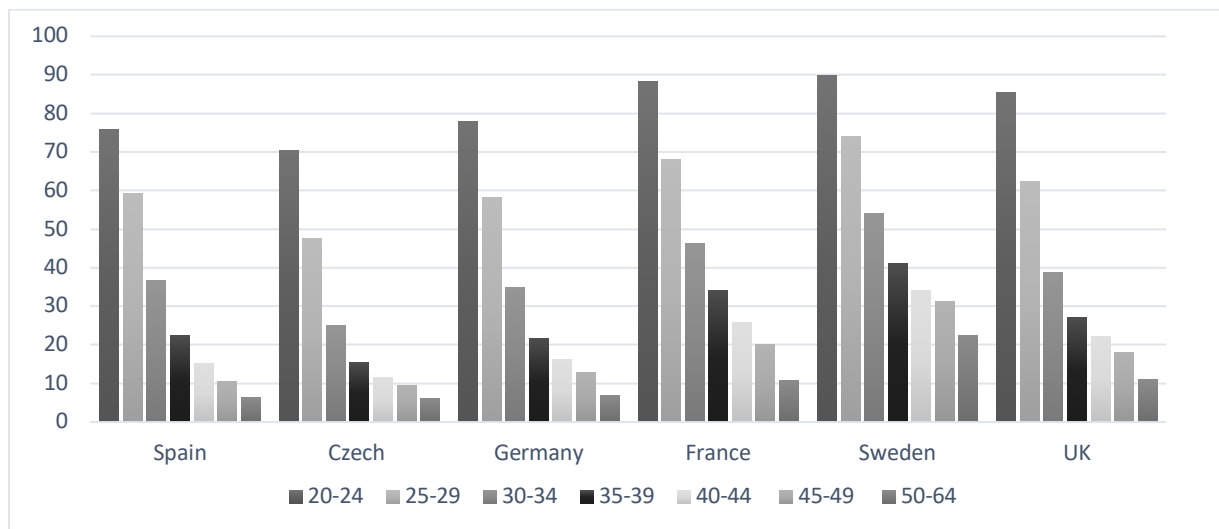
Figure 6.7: Percentage of male cohabitors among all partnered men* by age group in six European countries in 2011

Source: The 2011 Census database from Eurostat
*partnered men include cohabitors and married ones.
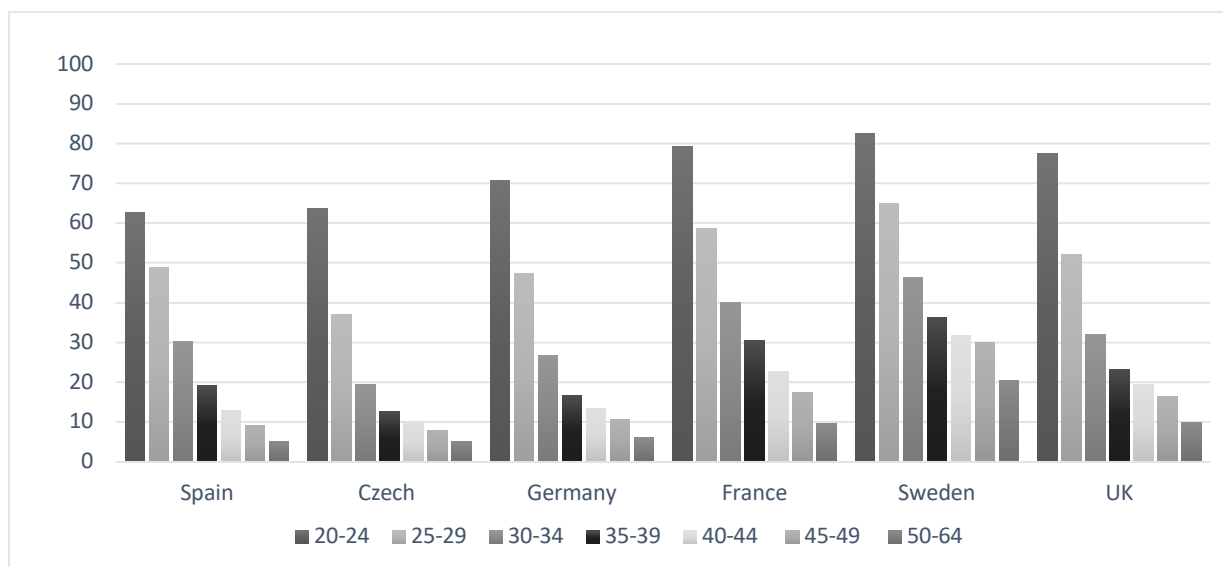
Figure 6.8: Percentage of female cohabitors among all partnered women* by age group in six European countries in 2011

Source: The 2011 Census database from Eurostat
* partnered women include cohabitors and married ones.

Figure 6.7 and 6.8 present the percentage of cohabiting men and women among all partnered men and women by age groups in six European countries in 2011. In general, cohabitation is more common among men than women in all age groups in the six selected countries, but the differences by age groups are very similar between men and women. Cohabitation is more common among young people and the proportion of cohabitors diminishes with age. Among people aged 20-24, the prevalence of cohabitation did not vary greatly across countries. It is noteworthy that the percentage of cohabitors in Spain (75.7% of partnered men and 62.8% of partnered women) was lower than in other countries (for example, 89.9% of partnered men and 82.5% of partnered women in Sweden, 88.2% of partnered men and 79.3% of partnered women in France) due to the fact that a significant number of Spanish young adults continue to live with their parents instead of forming an independent household, especially after the current economic crisis. Moreover, disparities between countries increase with age. Among couples in the age group 35-39, the proportion of cohabitors in Sweden (41.2% of men and 36.5% of women) was around twice as high as in Spain (22.6% of men and 19.4% of women), Germany (21.7% of men and 16.8% of women), and the Czech Republic (15.6% of men and 12.3% of women). In Spain, not only the percentage of cohabitation doubled between 2001 and 2011, but the increase also varied across age groups (not shown in the figure). For example, the highest growth of the share of cohabitation was found

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among partnered Spaniards aged 25-29 (increased by 34.8 percentage points for men and 30.4 percentage points for women) compared with those who were aged 35-39 (increased by 24.2 percentage points for men and 20.4 percentage points for women). Therefore, it is suggested that the recent decline of marriage and the rising age of first marriage in Spain may be partially explained by the rapid spread of cohabitation.
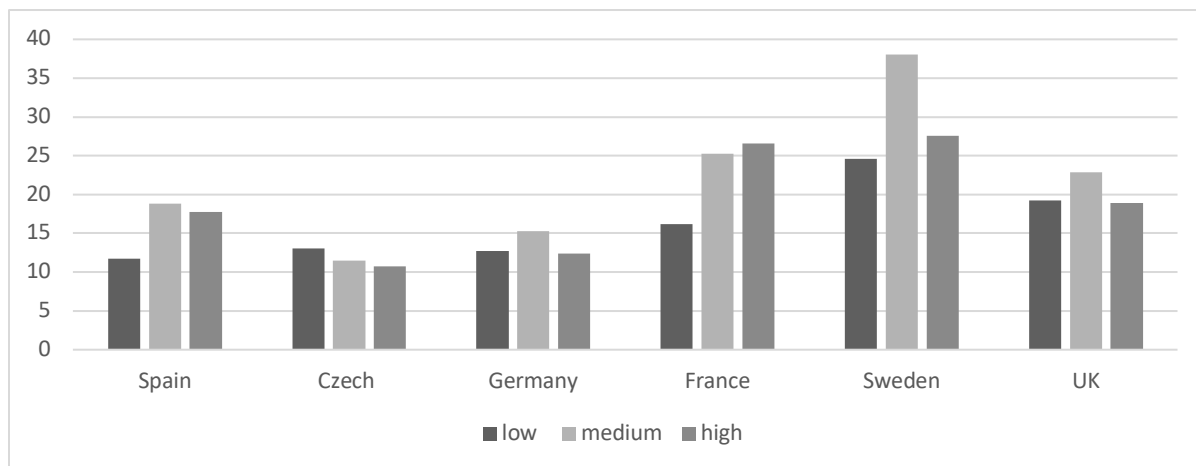
Figure 6.9: Percentage of male cohabitors among all partnered men* by educational levels in six European countries in 2011

Source: The 2011 Census database from Eurostat
*partnered men include cohabitors and married ones.

Figure 6.9 presents the variations across countries in the share of male cohabitors among all partnered men by educational levels and gradients. Educational level is classified into three types: low, medium and high based on the ISCED classification system. The "low education" corresponds to ISCED levels 0-2, that is, pre-primary, primary, or lower secondary education; the "medium education" corresponds to ISCED levels 3-4, that is, upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education; "high education" corresponds to ISCED levels 5-6, that is, first and second stage of tertiary education. For example, in the Czech Republic, more highly-educated men have a lower likelihood of living with a partner out of wedlock than their lower-educated counterparts. By contrast, the educational gradient of living with an unmarried partner among French men is positive, which indicates that men with higher education are more likely to cohabit rather than to marry. Finally, in Spain, Germany, Sweden and the UK, the share of male cohabitors with medium education is the highest among all categories. Studies from the US suggest that moderately-educated young adults, referring to those "who hold high school degree or some college education

but not a 4-year bachelor's degree" (Wilcox et al., 2012), have more deeply suffered from the marginalization of marriage and the increasing instability of family life in recent decades mainly due to a growing instability of their economic situations owing to globalization and changing economic structures (Cherlin, Ribar, & Ysutake, 2016). Therefore, an increasing number of moderately-educated men choose cohabitation because it requires less economic stability than marriage does. Some countries also show a similar trend that men in Spain, Germany, Sweden, and the UK who hold a medium education are more likely to cohabit rather than to marry.
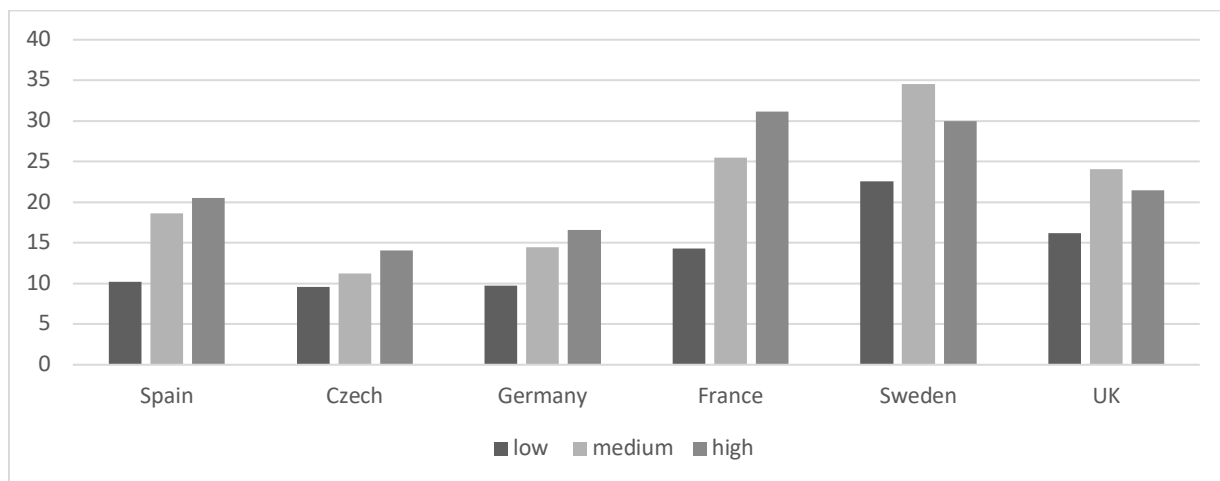
Figure 6.10: Percentage of female cohabitors among all partnered women* by level of education in six European countries in 2011

Source: The 2011 Census database from Eurostat
* partnered women include cohabitors and married ones.

In order to illustrate how women's living arrangements may differ by socioeconomic status across countries, data is also presented on female cohabitation by educational attainment, as the distribution of people with a given level of education in different European nations (Figure 6.10). In the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain and France, the likelihood of living with a partner outside of marriage is positively related to the level of women's education. For instance, in Spain, around 20.5% of women with the high educational level live in cohabiting union, compared to 18.6% of women with medium level of education and 10.2% of women with low educational attainment. On the other hand, in Sweden and the UK, the share of women with medium educational attainment (34.6% in Sweden and 24% in the UK) living in a cohabiting union is higher than the share of

women with low level of education (22.6% in Sweden and 16.2% in the UK), and also higher than the share of women with a high level of education (30% in Sweden and 21.5% in the UK).

6.4   Fertility patterns

Not only have partnership formation patterns changed dramatically, but most European countries have experienced a decline in the fertility rate over the last few decades, so that total fertility rates are now below the population replacement rate of two children per women in most countries. Postponement of marriage and childbearing plays an important role in the decline in fertility rates. Owing to widespread access to contraceptives, women have achieved control over the timing and occurrence of childbearing. Many adults choose to postpone getting married and having children until they attain financial stability and can afford costs of wedding and housing. However, the upper limit for female fertility, termed as the biological block, makes it difficult for women who postpone childbearing to get pregnant at later ages. Hence, the proportion of childless women has increased as a consequence of either a women's decision not to have children or their inability to conceive. More importantly, with the diversification of partnership formation and family structure, there are a growing number of children being raised in non-traditional forms of families. Cohabiting-parent families are of particular concern due to the spread of cohabitation and the higher incidence of adverse outcomes of children such as poverty compared to married-parent families (Manning & Lichter, 1996; Lerman, 2002; Brown, 2004; Bradshaw & Holmes, 2010).
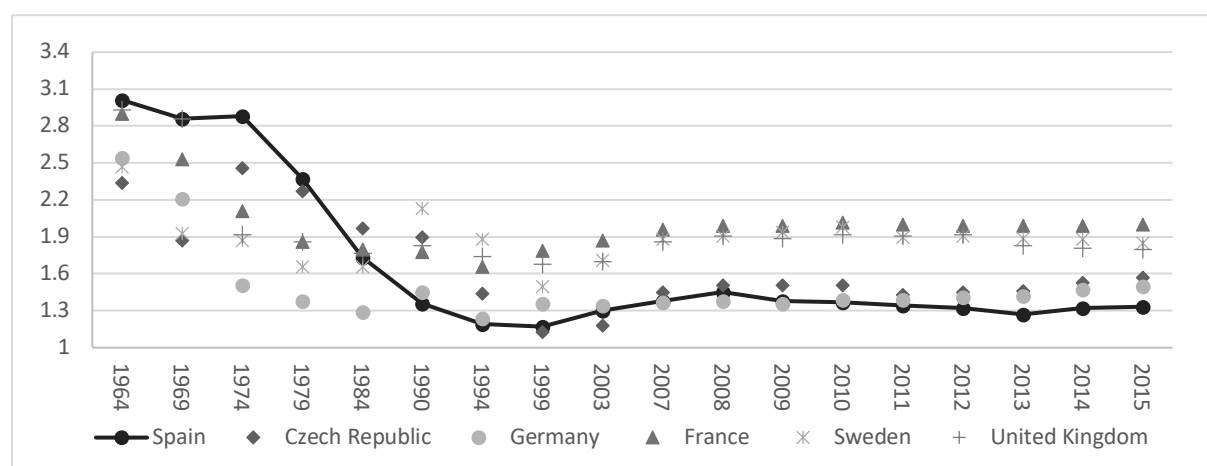
Figure 6.11: Total fertility rates in six European countries
Source: Eurostat

Total fertility rates (TFR) fell sharply in European countries over the past few decades. Rates of fertility in the six countries have been lower than the replacement level since 1981. The TFR bottomed out at the end of the 1990s and has edged up since the start of the 2000s (Figure 6.11). Moreover, the pace of decrease in the TFR varies greatly between countries. In Sweden and France, the reduction in the TFR started earlier than in other European nations, but there has been a rebound in fertility that almost reaches the replacement level since the early 2000s. By contrast, Southern Europe manifested a quite different shape of the fertility pattern from other countries. For example, in Spain, the fertility rate peaked at 3 children per woman by the middle of 1960s, with values similar to those in France and the United Kingdom. Even though the decline in the TFR among Spanish women began about ten years later than in countries from Western and Northern Europe, it fell dramatically to a trough of 1.13 in 1998 that was lower than the TFRs in most of the rest of Europe. From 1999 to 2008, the TFR slightly elevated and stayed relatively stable at about 1.3 children per woman. This growth was associated with a mass arrival of migrant women from South America and North Africa to Spain. Then, the TFRs have dropped again since the start of the economic crisis in 2008, which may be related to the return of migrants to their home countries due to the current economic and employment crisis in Spain. Hence, Spain remains one of the first countries to attain and sustain a lowest-low fertility rate.
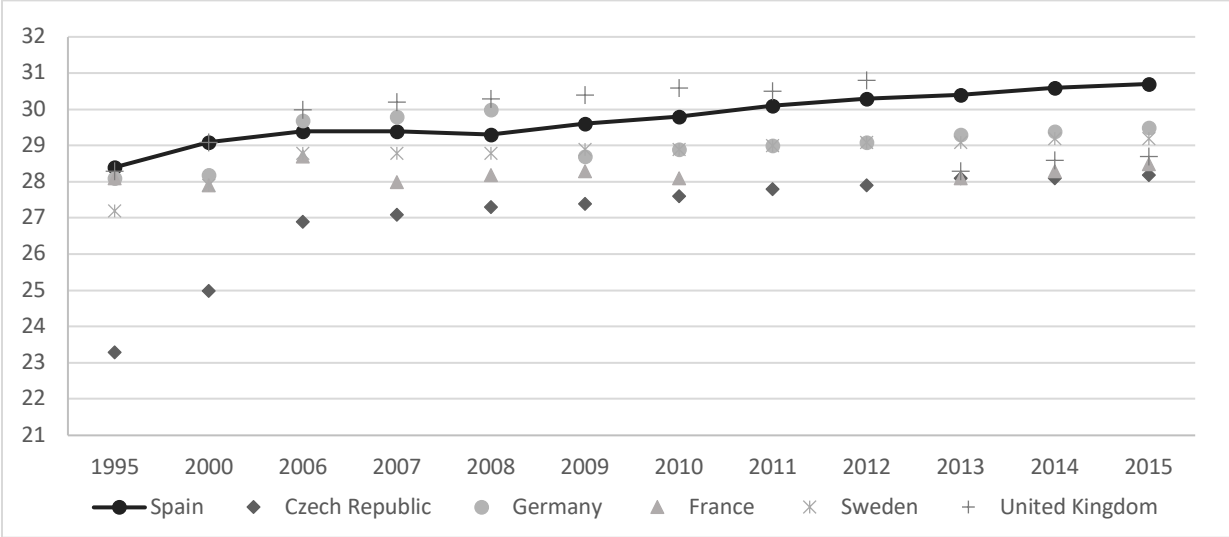
Figure 6.12: Mean age of women at birth of first child

Source: Eurostat; data for France from the INSEE.

Moreover, the mean age at first birth among women in Europe appears to have an increase on average, which plays a crucial role in explaining the reduction in the TFR as well as variations across countries (Figure 6.12). In 1995, the average mean age of women at first childbirth was very similar in Europe, at around 27-28 years, except for the Czech Republic (at 23.3 years). On the other hand, in 2015 the mean age of women at birth of first child in Spain (at 31 years) was significantly higher than in other selected reference nations (at around 28-29 years).
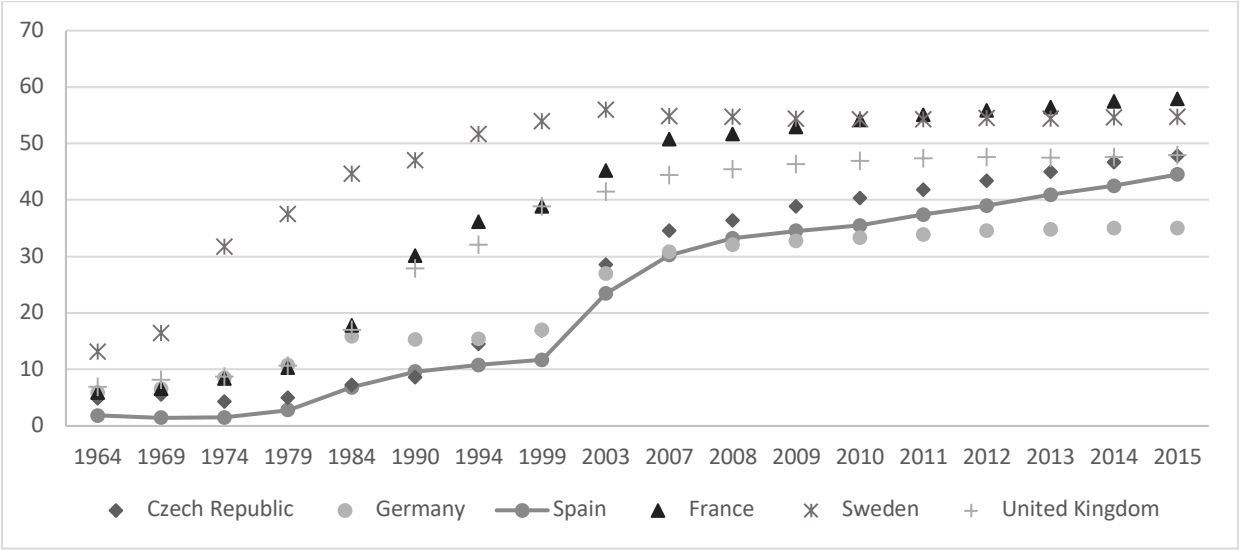
Figure 6.13: Proportion (%) of live births outside of marriage in six European countries
Source: Eurostat; data for France in 2013-2015 from INED.

The link between marriage and childbearing has been significantly weakened in Europe, as evidenced by the dramatic upward trend of births outside of marriage during recent past decades (Figure 6.13). In addition to the growth in childbearing outside of marriage across all these nations, there continues to be a deal of variations in the level of nonmarital births. In 1964, births outside of marriage were quite rare, particularly in Southern European countries. For example, only 1.8% children were born to unwed mothers in Spain. By contrast, the Nordic countries were forerunners in family changes, with 13.1% of children born out of wedlock in Sweden in the same year. At that time, the majority of couples got married once they decided to have children in order to protect themselves and their children from legal discrimination and social stigma. The disparities between countries continued to widen until the end of 1990s owing to a remarkable increase in the percentage of unwed childbearing in Sweden, France and the UK, and a consistently low

percentage in Spain, Germany and the Czech Republic. As latecomers, a sharp growth in nonmarital births has occurred in Spain, Germany and the Czech Republic since the beginning of 2000s. In recent years, the gap in unmarried childbearing between countries has narrowed. By 2015, over 45% children were born to unwed mothers (from 44.5% in Spain to 57.9% in France) in all countries studied except in Germany (35%), and between 1964 and 2015 the proportion of nonmarital children has increased by around 43 percentage points in Spain (from 1.8% in 1964 to 44.5% in 2015) and in the Czech Republic (from 4.8% in 1964 to 47.8% in 2015).

6.5   Divorce and union dissolution

Patterns of partnership formation and dissolution are changing considerably in Western countries. The divorce rate has risen in most European countries since the 1960s. Although some countries have consistently higher divorce rates than others, a general upward trend has been witnessed in the majority of countries, implying that the rise in divorce cannot be attributed to factors peculiar to a certain society. It is noteworthy that the divorce rates have dramatically grown over the past decade in the Mediterranean countries where the rates were traditionally much lower than other parts of Europe (Vignoli & Ferro, 2009; Bernardi & Martínez-Pastor, 2010). A substantial body of research has been conducted in response to these developments aiming to understand the determinants and consequences of marital dissolution. One of the most important contributions to this subject was made by William Goode (1963; 1993). In his book "*World Changes in Divorce Patterns*", Goode asserted that marital disruption would become more common among the poor than the wealthy when barriers to disrupting a marriage have been eradicated due to the increase in access to divorce, shifts in social norms, greater female economic independence, and rising standards of living. Empirical evidence also demonstrates a weakening of the positive educational gradient in divorce over time and a reversal in the direction of gradient in countries where divorce is more common (Härkönen & Dronkers, 2006; Matysiak, Styrc, & Vignoli, 2014).

In recent years, divorce rates have leveled off and even decreased in countries that used to have relatively high levels. However, due to the rise in unmarried cohabitation and in the formation of higher-order cohabitation, the total rates of partnership disruption and re-partnering may actually be increasing over time (Cherlin, 2017). In addition, the prevalence of untraditional family forms may complicate the correlation between partnership dissolution and education. Once the

dissolution of cohabiting unions is taken into account, the educational gradient of union dissolution has not reversed over time (Matysiak, Styrc, & Vignoli, 2014; Perelli-Harris & Lyons-Amos, 2016), which contradicts findings only on marital disruption. Therefore, the educational gradient in the dissolution of cohabitation is more varied and less clear than the educational gradient of marriage disruption.
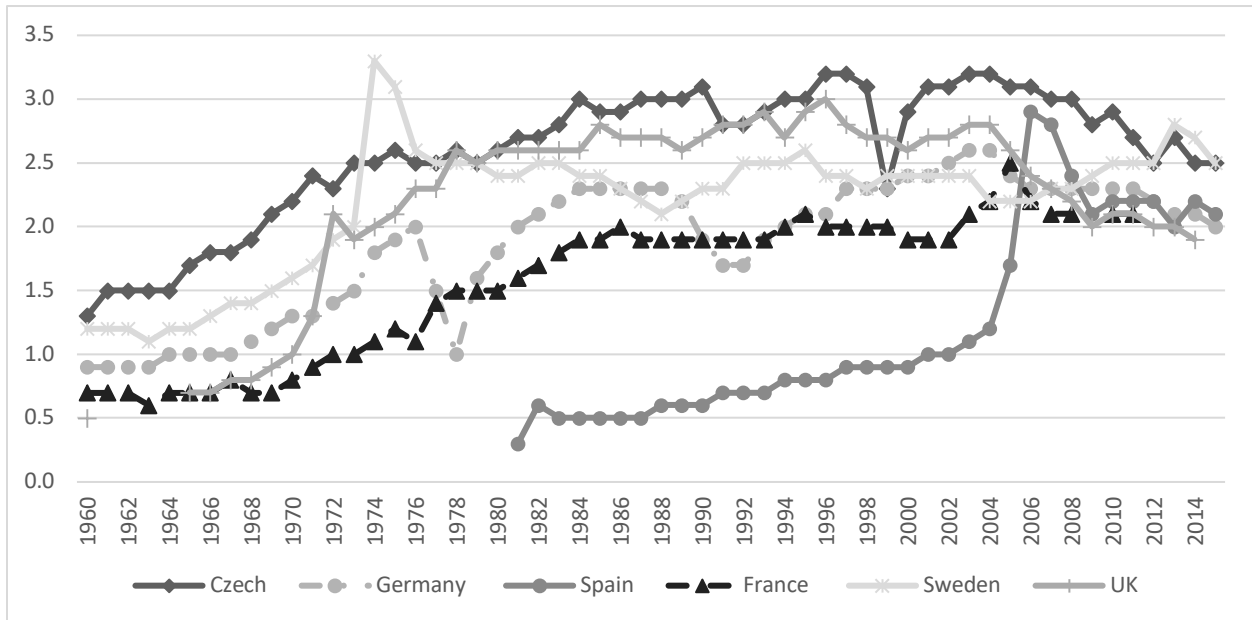
Figure 6.14: Crude divorce rates in six European countries (per 1000 persons)
Source: Eurostat. Data for the Czech Republic from the Czech Statistical Office.
Note: Statistics before 2006 did not include legal separations as divorces.

Figure 6.14 presents the trends of divorce for the six selected European countries. The crude divorce rate is defined as the number of divorces occurring among the population in that year, per 1000 mid-year inhabitants regardless of marital status and membership in a specific marriage cohort. Although this indicator is neither sensitive to changes in the relevant risk population nor a perfect measure of underlying marital instability (Schoen & Canudas-Romo, 2006), it is available over a long period of time for almost all countries. Divorce rates experienced a sharp rise in most of the chosen countries at the start of 1960s, especially after major liberalizations in divorce legislation (Härkönen, 2014). The overall trend of divorce corresponds with a long-term growth in family instability at the individual level over time.

There were great variations across countries. Sweden was one of the first European countries to implement the unilateral "no fault" divorce in 1974, which means that either spouse can

terminate the marriage without the consent of the other and without providing any specific reasons. As shown in Figure 6.14, the liberalization of Swedish divorce law resulted in a short-term spike in crude divorce rates, from 2.0 to 3.3 per 1000 persons in 1973-1974. In addition, the divorce rates in Germany have greatly risen since the mid-1960s except for two time points: 1978/1979 and 1991/1992 (shown in Figure 13). The divorce law changes in West (1978/1979) and East Germany (1991/1992) accounted for these two substantial declines respectively (Wagner, et al. 2015). For instance, by the beginning of the 1990s, the adoption of the West German divorce law extended the divorce procedure to East Germany (Böttcher, 2006), together with a great deal of uncertainty about political and social developments in the course of unification (Hummelsheim, 2009), contributed to the considerable decline in divorce rates in 1991-1992. On the other hand, Moreover, the Czech Republic has a long history of high divorce rates, which have been higher than most of the selected countries since 1960. Likewise, the change of legislation[20] explained the dramatic decrease in the divorce rates in 1999, from 3.1 to 2.3 per 1000 persons in 1998-1999 (Dufek, 2007). By the turn of the new millennium, most European countries had liberalized their divorce legislation, which led to the considerable rise in divorce rates between the 1960s and the 2000s.

Spain displays some kind of unique pattern characterized by very low divorce rates until the turn of the century mainly resulting from the long-lasting juridical barriers, by which the cost of attaining divorce was high and time-consuming. In Spain, divorce was reintroduced in 1981[21], but the granting of divorce required previous separation, either legally or de facto, for a certain period of time for nearly all spouses, and sometimes, divorce had to be fault-based or be accompanied by matrimonial misconduct (Flaquer & Garriga, 2009; Flaquer, 2012). Hence, before 2005, the number of separations was much higher than the number of divorces (Flaquer & Garriga, 2009). In 2005, divorce law was liberalized through including no-fault and unilateral divorce, reducing the costs of divorce, and making the process faster and easier. Accordingly, divorce rates in Spain soared from 1.7 to 2.9 per 1000 population in 2005-2006, which made Spain one of the leaders in the divorce league. In 2007, the divorce rate sharply decreased, and then has maintained around 2.1 since 2009, implying that people might postpone divorce during the Great Recession. The

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[20] The great amendment of the Act on Family in 1998 brought about key changes in divorce rules.
[21] In Spain, divorce had been introduced for the first time during the Second Spanish Republic by the Divorce Act in 1932, which was abrogated by Franco in 1939 (Flaquer & Garriga, 2009).

current economic crisis in Spain is characterized by skyrocketing unemployment and the collapse of the housing market. Consequently, it has been extremely difficult for spouses wanting a divorce to sell their common house at a reasonable price and afford two separate households. The downward trend of divorce in Spain after 2007 suggests the potential influence of economic recession on changes in family behavior.

Table 6.5: Percentage of heterosexual individuals aged 21-79 whose first union was a cohabiting union, a cohabiting union followed by marriage, and a direct marriage (1); percentages of first union dissolved (2); and mean duration of first union in years (3)

		% of total	% of first unions dissolved	Mean union duration (years)
	First union status	(1)	(2)	(3)
Spain	only cohabitation	11.9	17.3	5.7
	cohabitation and marriage	5.8	10	13.2
	only marriage	82.2	6.9	27.3
Hungary	only cohabitation	13.5	44	4.2
	cohabitation and marriage	7.4	25.7	11.3
	only marriage	79.1	23.7	23.1
Germany	only cohabitation	15	44.8	4.7
	cohabitation and marriage	28.9	14.3	17.8
	only marriage	56	12.5	27.3
France	only cohabitation	26.3	54.3	5.8
	cohabitation and marriage	27.2	13.8	16
	only marriage	46.5	17.9	29.5
Norway	only cohabitation	28.5	57.6	6
	cohabitation and marriage	30.5	21.8	18.5
	only marriage	41	23.7	27.5
UK	only cohabitation	15.8	36.3	4.6
	cohabitation and marriage	26.3	13	13.1
	only marriage	57.9	7.7	30.3

Source: Dronkers, J. (2016). Cohabitation, marriage, and union instability in Europe [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://ifstudies.org/blog/cohabitation-marriage-and-union-instability-in-europe.
Note: "only cohabitation" refers to all unmarried cohabiting relationships, regardless of marital status; "cohabitation and marriage" means a marriage preceded by cohabitation; "only marriage" refers to direct marriage. Data for Sweden and the Czech Republic was not available in this study.
*Data from the Gender and Generations Surveys (GGS) conducted between 2004 and 2010.

Table 6.5 shows the cross-national variation in the first unions of heterosexual partners who started their union after 20 years old and were interviewed at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In Spain (82.2%), couples were more likely to marry directly than their counterparts in Northern (e.g. 41% in Norway) and Western European countries (e.g. 56% in Germany; 57.9% in the UK, and 46.5% in France). It is noteworthy that cohabitation followed by marriage in Spain (5.8%) was not as common as in other European countries, such as Norway (30.5%), France (27.2%), and Germany (28.9%). In general, cohabiting couples had a higher likelihood of separating than married couples. Direct marriages were comparatively more stable than marriage preceded by cohabitation. Interestingly, the proportion of union dissolution, including marital disruption and dissolution of cohabiting unions, was lower in Spain than in other selected countries. In addition, the duration of cohabiting unions in Spain (5.7 years) was longer than Hungary (4.2 years), Germany (4.7 years), and the UK (4.6 years). These facts might be explained by variations in the age of entry into the first union and the characteristics of cohabitors in different countries. In Spain, young adults tend to prolong their co-residence with parents, and getting married is a major reason for them to leave the parental home. This implies that cohabitors in Spain may be more emotionally mature when choosing their living arrangements and have the economic capability to form a new family.

6.6   Remarriage and repartnering

Cherlin (2017, p.1288) stated that "just as divorce has been superseded by the broader concept of union dissolution, remarriage has been superseded by union repartnering". All these "new" terms reflect changes in the patterns of partnership formation — the decline in marriage and the rise in cohabitation, as well as the increased complexity of family life. Moreover, the growth of the instability of both marital and unmarried partnerships, demonstrated by the increased divorce rates and high risks of cohabiting unions ending in separation (Kiernan, 2004; Perelli-Harris et al., 2017) has led to a rise in the incidence of repartnering in almost all European nations (Gałęzewska, Perelli-Harris, & Berrington, 2017). It has been suggested that remarriage probabilities after divorce may have declined since the 1960s (Lesthaeghe, 1995). However, post-marital cohabitation has emerged, to some extent, as a substitute for remarriage. Therefore, rates of

repartnering including both formal remarriage and cohabitation may be as high as in the past or have even increased (Cherlin, 2017; Gałęzewska, Perelli-Harris, & Berrington, 2017).

Findings on the impact of demographic characteristics on the probability of repartnering are strong and consistent across studies. The likelihood of repartnering is lower among women who have resident children and for women who are older at the time of union dissolution (De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2003; Ivanova, Kalmijn, & Uunk, 2013). Moreover, the age effect appears to be stronger for women than for men, and the effects of resident children on men's repartnering are more mixed — sometimes negative (Sweeney, 1997) — than for women, but they are sometimes insignificant (Smock, 1990; Wu, 1994). Furthermore, Gałęzewska, Perelli-Harris, and Berrington (2017) find that once the demographic characteristics are controlled, the previously cohabiting women do not differ from the divorced women in terms of repartnering behavior.

In addition, previous results concerning the socioeconomic determinants of repartnering are inconsistent and varied by gender (for example, Sweeney, 2002; De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2003; Wu & Schimmele, 2005; Dewilde & Uunk, 2008). One more recent research from Pasteels and Mortelmans (2017) suggest that a "two-tier family system" has emerged in the repartnering market, indicating a wide discrepancy between lowest and highest income groups with regards to repartnering behavior. More exactly, both male and female divorced people as well as former cohabitors with labor income have a higher likelihood of repartnering, indicating that labor force participation increases the chance of repartnering for both genders.

Figure 6.15 plots the number of divorces in relation to the total number of remarriages among females and males who were legally dissolved. In most of the selected countries, the absolute number of remarriages rose, which can mainly be attributed to the increase in the number of divorces. Moreover, the share of remarriages among all marriages has risen (e.g. in Spain, from 0.02% for both genders in 1981 to 14.5% for females and 15.3% for males in 2014; in Germany, from 6.5% for females and 7% for males in 1965 to 23% for both genders in 2014, not shown in the figure), not only due to the increase in divorce, but also to the downward trend of first marriages. In addition, the gap between divorces and remarriages has widened since 1960s in almost all countries, implying that rates of remarriage may virtually may have decreased following the same trend as first marriages. Finally, the ratios between remarriage rates[22] for females and males reveal

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[22] The percentages of divorced females and males married in one year to the total number of marriages in the same year.

that men were overall more likely to remarry than women in Spain, the Czech Republic, France, Sweden[23] (before the end of 1990s), and the UK (not shown in the figure). In Spain, there has been a gradual progression of levelling between females and males in terms of remarriage rates since the beginning of 1980s. In 1982, the probability of remarriage for men was twice as high as for women, which decreased to almost equal in recent years.

Figure 6.15: The total number of divorces and remarriages of divorced females and males in the six countries

Source: Eurostat

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[23] In response to reform of the widow's pension system, there was a dramatic increase in the number of remarriages among men and women in 1989.

6.7   Summary

This chapter describes family changes in Spain and compared to five other European nations representing a variety of family regimes and patterns of union formation and dissolution. It reviews trends in cohabitation, parenthood, separation, and repartnering and compares the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of cohabiting and married men and women across countries and over time. A particular attention has been paid to the evolution of cohabitation and its role in family formation, fertility, and union dissolution.

In Spain, changes in family formation behavior have followed a similar path as in Central and Northern European countries: the decline and delay in marriage and fertility, the decoupling of marriage from parenthood. Although these family changes started relatively late in Spain compared to Northern and Western European countries, they developed at an extremely rapid pace. For example, Spain was among the first countries to reach levels of lowest-low fertility, and the delay of marriage and childbearing has been more pronounced than in Western and Northern European countries.

In many Western countries, the substantial rise in cohabitation, has offset to some extent much of the decrease in marriage, and unmarried childbearing partly balances out the decline in fertility rates (Coppola & Di Cesare, 2008). Nevertheless, Spain as well as other Southern European countries show a diverse trend that differentiates them from other parts of Europe. The rapid decrease in marriage and fertility was not simultaneously accompanied by the widespread practices of cohabitation and the rise of unmarried births. Even until the late 1990s, the diffusion of cohabitation and unmarried childbearing remained very low. Thus, the role of cohabitation in the landscape of family formation in Spain was labelled "marginal" (Heuveline & Timberlake, 2004), implying that cultural and institutional biases confined cohabitation to a small minority of couples, and children's exposure to parental cohabitation is even lower. Since the beginning of the 2000s, the diffusion of cohabitation and the rise in non-marital births seem to have intensified in Spain. There has been a substantial and rapid increase in the adoption of cohabitation, which has shifted from a rare practice to a comparatively common experience, in particular among recent cohorts. Furthermore, the number of unwed births continues to grow, which has been largely driven by the growing proportion of births to cohabiting parents. Therefore, cohabitation is no longer a marginal phenomenon in Spain, it has become instead a common and socially accepted living arrangement

for couples so that a greater share of children is expected to be born to or raised in cohabiting-parent families.

The continuing upward trend in cohabitation may also lead to a series of shifts in union dissolution and repartnering. In Spain, as well as in other selected countries, cohabitors have a much higher risk of separation than married couples. Nevertheless, the relatively longer duration of cohabiting unions in Spain indicate that the nature of cohabitation and the features of cohabitors may differ from their counterparts in other countries. Furthermore, cohabitation may make differences in individuals' repartnering behavior. Although evidence suggests that rates of remarriage after divorce may have decreased, the trends of repartnering are unclear when cohabiting unions are taken into consideration. Moreover, our knowledge on the association between cohabitation and repartnering remains limited. There is no doubt that nowadays families in Spain, like in other European countries, have become increasingly diverse and complex. As a result, child well-being is inevitably affected by the increasing complexity and instability of families.

More importantly, the worsening economic conditions, job dislocation, and the widened economic inequality have a devastating influence on partnership formation, family stability (Walsh, 2016). The financial prospects of young people nowadays are lower than those of the last generations, with more uncertainty and less stable, such as higher unemployment rates and recurring job transitions. As a result, a new "marriage gap" has emerged with the increasing income gap (Cherlin, 2010; Fincham & Beach, 2010; Walsh, 2016). More exactly, between those who with greater economic resources and earning prospects are more likely to get married and less likely to divorce than those with less economic resources, which thereby lead to "diverging destinies" (McLanahan, 2004) of families and children. Despite the fact that cohabitation was more common among those with better socioeconomic characteristics in some countries at the start of the Second Demographic Transition, the reversal of social class gradient has been emerging and becoming increasingly clear.

Spanish families may have been following the same trajectory that those with better economic prospects tend to choose marriage, live in a stable and gender-egalitarian partnership, bear and rear children within marriage, and have lower risks of divorce; oppositely, families with less economic resources have higher risks of unmarried cohabitation, childbearing outside of wedlock, and union dissolution. Our recent study regarding mothers' union status and birth outcomes indicates that

highly-educated mothers are less likely to give birth within cohabitation than less-educated mothers. Therefore, in order to understand the implications of the increase in cohabitation for child well-being, we should get knowledge on the potential differences in the traits of married and cohabiting parents. Prior literature focuses more on mothers, and relatively less is known about fathers' socioeconomic characteristics by union statuses. Just as Kalmijn (2011) addressed, underestimating the role of men's economic resources in union formation is just like "throwing out the baby with the bathwater". Hence, more emphases will be put on fathers in this thesis. In addition, Spain was one of the countries hardest hit by the Great Recession. The current crisis led to substantial shifts in the composition of employment and had a disproportionately negative effect on working men relative to women (De la Rica & Rebollo-Sanz, 2017), and increased social class inequalities. These changes in economic conditions may subsequently impact on their family behavior. Overall, the very recent and rapid changes in partnership formation and reproductive behavior, the peculiarities of Mediterranean family formation pattern and institutional factors (such as family policy and legal regulations), together with precarious economic and work situations, altogether make Spain a particularly interesting case to study.

Chapter 7 Data and methodology

7.1 Research questions and hypotheses

Although there is an increasing number of studies focusing on cohabitation and marriage (Meil Landwerlin, 2003; Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2008; 2013; Castro-Martín, 2010), to my knowledge there is no research with regards to the relationship between parents' cohabitation and child poverty risks in Spain. In addition, there are some gaps in previous studies: first, a lot of research on cohabitation did not distinguish parents from couples (e.g. Goldscheider, Turcotte, & Kopp, 2001; Härkönen & Dronkers, 2006; Kalmijn, 2013). Meanings attached to cohabitation and motivations to choose cohabitation over marriage may be quite different for parents compared to their childless counterparts. Second, considering the job polarization and the growing employment uncertainty, more detailed information on employment situation should be taken into account, rather than focusing only on education or on employment/non-employment status (Vignoli, Tocchioni, & Salvini, 2016). However, many prior studies on the link between family structure and child poverty did not explicitly explore the role of different employment types and stability (e.g. Cantó-Sánchez & Mercader-Prats, 1998; Lichter & Crowley, 2004; Manning & Brown, 2006; Misra et al., 2012). Finally, considering that Spain has a higher child poverty rate than other EU countries, it is important to know which factor contributes more to the cross-national differences in child poverty rates: the prevalence of cohabitation, market income, or social welfare. Getting knowledge on the relative contribution of these factors to child poverty risks is helpful in order to bring to light effective ways to combat child poverty.

(1) Whether and how do children in cohabiting-parent households differ from those in married-parent households in terms of the poverty risks?

Prior work from US and some European countries suggests that children in cohabiting-parent families fare worse than children in married-parent families (Manning & Lichter, 1996; Carlson & Danziger, 1999; Acs & Nelson, 2002; Lerman, 2002; Manning, 2015; Gibson-Davis, 2016). Given that the rapid growth in cohabitation and the lack of relevant research conducted in Spain, it is unclear whether the children in cohabiting-parent households fare better or worse than the children in married-parent households. In addition, considering that marriage is more

institutionalized than cohabitation, cohabiting-parent households may benefit less from social welfare than their married counterparts. In light of previous findings (e.g. Manning & Lichter, 1996; Manning & Brown, 2006; Heuveline & Weinshenker, 2008; Bradshaw & Holmes, 2010), I propose that,

H1: Children in cohabiting-parent households are more likely to be in monetary poverty than children in married-parent households. The relationship between parental union status and post-taxes and transfers child poverty will be stronger than the association with pre-taxes and transfers child poverty.

Child poverty is a multi-dimensional concept. In addition to monetary poverty, material deprivation is often used as an alternative measure of child economic well-being (Manning & Brown, 2006). Material deprivation can reflect the actual living conditions of children in households and, most importantly, it does not involve the assumptions regarding the allocation of resources within households (Manning & Brown, 2006). Resources allocation and money management differ across parents' union statuses (Kenney, 2003; Oropesa, Landale, & Kenkre, 2003; DeLeire & Kalil, 2005). In comparison to married-parent families, cohabiting-parent families are found to differ in their spending patterns, with more focuses on individual priorities and less on child-related goods or invest less household public goods due to less commitment and lower relationship stability (Kenney, 2003; DeLeire & Kalil, 2005). Therefore, I expect that

H2: Children in cohabiting-parent households have higher risks of experiencing material deprivation than children in married-parent households.

(2) Are these disparities in children's economic well-being between married- and cohabiting-parent households explained by parental union status *per se* or by the selection effect?

There are two main mechanisms underlying the association between parental unions status and children's well-being: the selection effect and the causal effect (e.g. Lerman, 2002; Brown, 2004; Hofferth, 2006; Goodman & Greaves, 2010; Thomson & McLanahan, 2012). The former mechanism emphasizes that the disadvantages of children living with cohabiting parents relative to those with married parents are attributable to their parents' characteristics. In other words, it is

the inequality in economic resources between cohabiting and married parents accounts for the disparities in the economic well-being of their children rather than union status *per se*.

Cohabiting unions are viewed as "poor man's marriage" (Kalmijn, 2011), implying that cohabitation is selective of individuals with lower levels of education and income as well as less employment stability (Manning & Lichter, 1996; Bumpass & Lu, 2000; Lundberg & Pollak, 2013). By contrast, marriage is more selective of people with the highest socioeconomic resources (Carlson, McLanahan, & England, 2004). Thus, differences in outcomes of children in married-parent families from those living with cohabiting parents may reflect these underlying disparities in their characteristics rather than being caused by union statuses *per se* (Goodman & Myck, 2005). In addition, economic resources are the predominant explanation for disparities in child well-being across family structure (Thomson, Hanson, & McLanahan, 1994). The economic situation of children directly affects their well-being through the lack of material resources (Bradshaw, Hoelscher, & Richardson, 2007), which are related to parents' ability to purchase high-quality goods and services for children (McLanahan, 2004). Furthermore, education is usually seen as a proxy for the economic resources available to parents because of the impacts on their earnings potential (Naz, Nilsen, & Vagstad, 2006). However, employment has become increasingly uncertain and precarious all over Europe, irrespective of educational levels (Vignoli, Tocchioni, & Salvini, 2016). Evidence from South European countries shows that the highly-educated are also those who are most influenced by the increase in employment precariousness and uncertainty (Barbieri & Scherer, 2009). Therefore, it is essential to take different types of employment situation into consideration rather than focusing only on educational differentials.

Prior studies regarding changes in family behavior focused more on women's increasing economic independence, while relatively less attention had been put on men. In fact, the increasing economic uncertainty of men is also the driving force of these changes (Oppenheimer, 1988; Kalmijn, 2011; Martín-García, 2013). It has been suggested that economic uncertainty has greater impacts on men, especially in countries from family-oriented welfare regimes (Mills & Blossfeld, 2013). In the case of Spain, men's employment was disproportionately affected by the financial crisis because of the high level of job destruction in the construction sector in which the majority of workers are males, whereas oppositely the job creation rates for women remained stable due to the structural transformation of advanced economies towards the service sector (Conde-Ruiz & Marra, 2016). Thus, it is possible that men and women respond differently to the growing

employment uncertainty in terms of their union formation practices (Vignoli, Tocchioni, & Salvini, 2016), which in turn may have a diverse effect on children's economic well-being. Moreover, some studies regarding child poverty use household employment statuses such as employment intensity (categorizing into no employment, partial employment, and full employment) (Heitzmann, 2010) or work intensity status of the household[24] (Notten & Roelen, 2010) instead employment status of each parent. Nevertheless, when men act primarily as household providers and women act as main caregivers, men's market performance plays a more important role in the economic well-being of the household (Vignoli, Tocchioni, & Salvini, 2016). Hence, the effects of men's part-time employment or unemployment on children's economic outcomes are not equal to that of women's. As a result, parents' socioeconomic characteristics need to be examined separately, rather than using one indicator presenting household employment statues. Hence, I propose,

H3(1): Differences in education and employment situation between married and cohabiting fathers and mothers account for the disparities in child monetary poverty and material deprivation between the two types of households.

The latter mechanism suggests that diversity in the features and the nature of cohabitation with respect to marriage account for the differences in children's economic well-being between married- and cohabiting-parent households. On the one hand, parental union status may have a direct impact on their economic circumstances. Marriage is found to be related to both higher wage levels and wage growth of men (Ginther & Zavodny, 2001; Hersch & Stratton, 2002; Killewald, 2012). Moreover, fatherhood is also associated with a wage premium (Knoester & Eggebeen, 2006; Augustine, Nelson, & Edin, 2009). Researchers found that married fathers enjoy more wage premium than cohabiting fathers (Killewald, 2012), implying a potential effect of the interaction between union statuses and fatherhood on men's wages. By using both cross-sectional and longitudinal data analysis, Bardasi and Taylor (2008) found the panel data methods reduce male marriage premium observed in cross-sectional analysis, more importantly, this premium remained

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[24] The work intensity status refers to "the work status over the past year for all work age household members (aged 18 to 64)", which is computed by "the ratio of worked months over workable months, averaged over all work age household members and subsequently categorised in four categories (WI=0, 0<WI<0.5,0.5<=WI<1, WI=1)" (Notten & Roelen, 2010: 42).

for married men but not cohabiting men, which is mainly attributable to differences in intra-household specialization rather than the selection effect. Therefore, although Killewald's (2012) finding is based on longitudinal data, it is reasonable to expect that married fathers have higher wage levels than cohabiting fathers in cross-sectional analysis. On the other hand, lower legal and interpersonal commitments of cohabitation relative to marriage affect cohabitors' investments into each other and to their children (Poortman & Mills, 2012). The lack of legal protection and a long-term binding decision makes cohabitors more cautious about their investment. Previous findings show that cohabitors contribute less to household common goods or to improve child well-being (Lerman, 2002; Kenney,2003; DeLeire & Kalil, 2005). What is more, material deprivation is believed to have advantages over monetary poverty as it better reflects the actual living conditions of the household (Manning & Brown, 2006). Studies found that cohabiting parents do not invest into their children as much as married parents (DeLeire & Kalil, 2005), even when they have similar socioeconomic and demographic characteristics (Lerman 2002; Kenney, 2003). Therefore, I expect that,

H3(2): Diversities in monetary poverty and material deprivation between married-parent and cohabiting-parent households cannot be explained by fathers' and mothers' education and employment situation. Moreover, the disparities in the likelihood of being materially deprived between cohabiting- and married-parent households will be larger than the diversities in the risk of monetary poverty between the two types of living arrangements.

(3) What factors contribute to the differences in child monetary poverty rates in Spain compared with the other European countries? The prevalence of cohabitation, market income, or social welfare?

Prior literature suggests that children living with cohabiting parents have higher risks of monetary poverty than children of married parents (Bradshaw & Holmes, 2010; Manning, 2015; Gibson-Davis, 2016). Hence, when the diffusion of cohabitation was low, the relative contribution of cohabitation to observed child poverty risks might be smaller. So, I expect that,

H4: Diversity in child poverty between Spain and other European countries is dependent on cross-national differences in distributions of children across living arrangements. Lower prevalence of

children in cohabitation in Spain relative to other nations will reduce the cross-national child monetary poverty gap.

Market income of households is crucial to children's economic circumstances (Bradbury, Jenkins, & Micklewright, 2001; Bradshaw, 2002). Thus, international differences in the labor market are of great magnitude to explain child poverty gaps between nations (Bradbury & Jäntti, 1999). Heuveline and Weinshenker (2008) compared the before-tax and transfers child poverty rates by household types across countries, and their results suggest that the child poverty gap between married- and cohabiting-parent households is smaller in countries with higher prevalence of cohabitation than in countries with low diffusion of cohabitation. It implies that households may fare differently with respect to market incomes across union types in different countries. Therefore, I propose,

H5: Diversity in child poverty between Spain and other European countries is dependent on differences in market incomes across nations. Greater cross-national disparities in market incomes increase the child monetary poverty gap between Spain and other nations. Moreover, disparity in market earnings between cohabiting- and married-parent households increases the child monetary poverty gap between Spain and countries with higher spread of cohabitation.

Social welfare plays a key role in the reduction of child poverty (Vleminckx & Smeeding, 2001; Lindquist & Lindquist, 2012), and it impact may account for the cross-national diversity in child poverty. In addition, the boundary between marriage and cohabitation has increasingly become ambiguous with the diffusion of cohabitation and children living in cohabiting unions (Landale & Fennelly, 1992; Bumpass & Lu, 2000; Brown, 2010), such as in terms of policies and legal regulations. Nevertheless, rights and responsibilities of cohabiting couples are still different from their married counterparts and vary greatly across nations. As shown in Chapter 3, cohabitors in Spain are granted relatively less rights of spouses such as income tax compared to countries with a higher prevalence of cohabitation. Therefore, I expect that,

H6: Diversity in child poverty between Spain compared to other European countries is dependent on differences in patterns of government redistribution across nations. Higher cross-national

disparities in government redistribution increase the child monetary gap between Spain and other nations. Moreover, differentials in taxes and transfers by living arrangements reduce the child monetary gap between Spain and countries with lower prevalence of cohabitation.

7.2   Data

7.2.1 Description of database

The data are from the European Union statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) cross-sectional survey 2006 and 2014. The European Union statistics on income and living conditions are a comprehensive database launched in 2003 and are released annually. It is administrated and organized by Eurostat. The data is collected by the National Statistical Institutes of each member country. This survey was formally launched in 2004 in fifteen nations and expanded in 2005 to cover EU-25 member states as well as Iceland and Norway. From 2007 onwards, more countries have been introduced, and the database was expanded to cover all EU-27 member states as well as Iceland, Turkey, Norway and Switzerland (thirty-one countries in total). In addition, the launching of the EU-SILC has experienced a transitional stage in terms of the collection of different types of incomes (Graf, Wenger, & Nedyalkova, 2011). The primary objective of the EU-SILC is to provide information on incomes, social exclusion, housing conditions, labor, education. The data collection does not operate as a single standard survey but allows a great deal of freedom by giving participating countries a list of variables which must be submitted to Eurostat. Most of the countries incorporated these questions into household surveys, while a few nations use register data to collect some information and obtain other information through interviews with randomly selected households such as Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Slovenia (Iacovou, Kaminska, & Levy, 2012).

The EU-SILC does not provide a household grid (a series of variables representing the relationships between members in the same household), but it contains information on both individuals and households — the identifiers of each individual's partner or spouse, as well as mother and father, and the identifier of each household. It is possible to identify whether a person is living as part of a couple and whether she/he is living with children or parents. However, for the parent-child relationships, the major shortcoming is the absence of information enabling to make

distinctions between biological parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, and step-parents. For instance, it is impossible to distinguish children living with both biological parents and children with one biological parent and his/her partner. In addition, the micro-level EU-SILC data is composed of two datasets — a cross-sectional component and a longitudinal component. The cross-sectional database contains larger sample sizes than the longitudinal dataset. Nevertheless, the longitudinal files do not include the same variables as the cross-sectional files. In this thesis, the cross-sectional dataset was selected for analyses over the longitudinal component because it focuses on comparisons between children living with cohabiting parents and children with married parents. The smaller sample sizes of cohabitors in longitudinal databases relative to cross-sectional databases may cause biases, taking into account that the number of cohabitors is relatively low. In addition, derived variables concerning poverty status were summarized based on the cross-sectional databases and therefore they are not available in the longitudinal datasets. Owing to the reasons stated above, analyses conducted in this thesis will be based on the cross-sectional component.

EU-SILC provides detailed information on individual's socio-economic status, such as education, labor market status, different types of incomes, housing conditions, and a variety of indicators in respect to living conditions. This is not common in cross-national surveys, especially those concentrating on the demographic development. The Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) also provides rich variables and information on the individuals' economic activity, income and economic well-being, together with the process of childbearing, partnership dynamics, and household composition. However, the main limitation of the GGS for this study is that Spain is not included in the survey. Other surveys such as International Social Survey Programme contain information on individual's attitudes toward a range of family behavior and subjective well-being, as well as income, education, and union status. On the other hand, information about detailed family composition is not available. More importantly, the sample sizes of cohabitors in some countries are very low, which is also one of the most common shortcomings in many cross-national comprehensive surveys. Although there are some surveys containing both demographic and socio-economic variables and providing enough sample sizes to study individuals in different union status, the limitation of these databases is the national focus, because they are only conducted in one given nation, such as the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP).

7.2.2 Sample selection

This analysis is restricted to parents and at least one child below 18 years living at the same household in that the main focus is the relationship between parental union status and children's economic well-being. Moreover, those living with grandparents are excluded from the analysis in order to reduce the potential effect of grandparents' pensions on the economic circumstances of households by parental union status. Multigenerational relationships are recognized as an important factor to combat child poverty and to secure well-being of children due to grandparents' contribution in time and financial support to families when in need or being troubled (Mutchler & Baker, 2009). Grandparents who live in the same household with grandchildren contribute extensively to share the parenting role (Goodman, 2007) through daily caring, or pool their economic resources in order to ameliorate the financial hardship experienced by children (Deleire & Kalil, 2002), especially in families exposed to higher risks of child poverty such as single-mother families (Lerman, 1996; Lichter & Crowley, 2004). Prior evidence shows that the support for the intergenerational co-residence is lower among cohabitors than their married counterparts (Seltzer, Lau, & Bianchi, 2012), and cohabitors less often receive financial support from parents than married couples (Hao, 1996; Artis & Martinez, 2016). As a result, concerning that grandparent co-residence plays an important role in children's economic well-being and its prevalence may vary by parental union statuses, the multigenerational households are not included in the present analysis (see Appendix Table A.1). In addition, some households may include members not related to children's parents (i.e. nonfamily housemates). Empirical studies found that income from nonfamily members contribute significantly less to meet the household needs or help other household members overcome financial hardship compared to married people, indicating that they are prone to keep income to themselves (Bauman, 1999). Scholars suggest that families experiencing financial hardship may have a higher tendency to live with nonfamily housemates in order to make ends meet (Edin & Lein, 1997). Hence, the rejection of this type of households may exclude some very impoverished children.

Children aged below 18 years are more likely to live with their parents, and their economic resources mainly or completely depend on their parents. Moreover, both parents' ages are restricted between 20 and 64 years at the time of interview. First, mother's and father's economic resources play an important role in the economic well-being of their child(ren). The working age population is usually defined as those aged between 15 and 64 years in the EU and also some

international organizations such as OECD (OECD, 2017). The exceptions in Europe are Spain, the UK and Iceland, where use the age range of 16 to 64 years of old. Whereas, considering that an increasing share of the EU population continues their studies into tertiary education, the age range of 20-64 years has been growingly employed by scholars and policymakers. For example, the Europe 2020 strategy target on employment was set based on the population aged 20 to 64 (European Commission, 2014). Second, most of the EU population aged 15 to 19 years are still in education or work training and therefore is not active in the labor market. According to Eurostat, the median age of leaving the formal education in the EU was around 21 years old and the age of attaining upper secondary education was about 20 in 2009 (the latest year available). The educational behavior and union formation are interrelated with each other (Hoem, 1986; Coppola, 2004). Participation in education takes time and, therefore, involves a postponement of people's entry into the first partnership and parenthood. During the period of receiving education and training, young people do not have the ability to form a family due to the high economic reliance on parents. Furthermore, there exists a social norm that finishing one's education is an important prerequisite for union formation and parenthood (Blossfeld & Huinink, 1991). The incompatibility between the role of student and mother generated by this norm affects women's partnership and fertility behavior. Hence, getting married, entering into a consensual union, and giving birth below 20 years of age are relatively rare phenomena in Europe. Third, most women give birth in their 30s and the mean birth age keeps growing. In 2006, above half of women on average gave birth in their 30s in the six selected countries except for the Czech Republic (45%) and France (48.5%) (Eurostat). Women continued to postpone childbearing in all these countries in 2014 except for the UK (the percentage of births in total to women aged 30-39 decreased from 60% in 2006 to 49.9% in 2014) and Sweden (from 57% in 2006 to 53.6% in 2014). More importantly, the share of births occurred to women in their 40s doubled in Spain (from 3.8% in 2006 to 7.2% in 2014). Likewise, women in most of these countries also postponed their first births. In Spain, a majority of first births (61.5%) were to mothers in the age group of 30-39, and 5.5% of first births occurred to women aged 40 and above in 2014. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that mothers might be living with at least one minor child in their late 50s even early 60s.

Table 7.1: Distribution of households of married, never-married cohabiting and other cohabiting parents aged 20-64 in the six European countries in 2006 and 2014 (%)

		2006				2014			
		Married	Never-married cohabitor	Other cohabitor	Total	Married	Never-married cohabitor	Other cohabitor	Total
Spain	N	3,170	129	83	3,382	2,587	206	100	2,893
	%	93.7	3.8	2.5	100.0	89.4	7.1	3.5	100.0
Czech	N	1,472	63	88	1,623	1,178	147	98	1,423
	%	90.7	3.9	5.4	100.0	82.8	10.3	6.9	100.0
Germany	N	2,773	84	115	2,972	1,816	104	91	2,011
	%	93.3	2.8	3.9	100.0	90.3	5.2	4.5	100.0
France†	N	2,150	505	173	2,828	1,784	745	160	2,689
	%	76.0	17.9	6.1	100.0	66.3	27.7	6.0	100.0
Sweden	N	1,425	527	142	2,094	1,004	359	116	1,479
	%	68.1	25.2	6.8	100.0	67.9	24.3	7.8	100.0
UK	N	1,809	209	121	2,139	1,592	295	86	1,973
	%	84.6	9.8	5.7	100.0	80.7	15.0	4.4	100.0

Notes: never-married cohabitor refers to both cohabiting parents were never married at the time of interview; other cohabitor refers to at least one of the cohabiting parents were divorced, widowed, or separated. Households include parents both aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents (Table A.1 shows the distribution of all married and cohabiting parents).
†Data for France are from 2007 because gross income was not available in France until 2007.

Table 7.1 shows the distribution of married and cohabiting couples aged 20-64 who live with at least one minor child and do not live with their parents in the same household in Spain and other five studied nations in 2006 and 2014. The proportions of cohabiting parents increased in all the six countries from 2006 to 2014. More importantly, the increase in cohabitation among never-married parents was greater than among those who were divorced, widowed, or separated. In Spain, the proportion of cohabiting parents rose from 6.3% in 2006 to 10.6% in 2014. Moreover, among cohabiting parents, those who were never-married increased by 3.3 percentage points compared to 1 percentage point among those with marital history. Although the share of cohabitation is still lower relative to other European countries, it is no longer a marginal phenomenon and children have become more likely to be involved in cohabiting-parent families in Spain.

7.3   Variables

7.3.1 Dependent variable

Children living in poverty tend to be worse off than their peers who are living in more favorable conditions in terms of health situation, academic performance, psychomotor and cognitive development. More importantly, growing up in impoverished environments has long-lasting negative effects. These children have a higher likelihood of becoming disadvantaged adults and then passing on poverty to the next generation. As stated in Chapter 4, it has been widely agreed that poverty is a multi-faceted concept, encompassing deprivations along multiple dimensions. The definitions of poverty used over time have reflected a shift of the emphasis from monetary to multiple aspects. The income-based indicators gauge indirectly living standards by focusing only on inputs, while material deprivation assesses more directly the living standard of a household by observing the enjoyment of goods and services that symbolize an acceptable but modest standard of living for most households in a society (Nolan & Whelan, 2010). Hence, material deprivation is increasingly incorporated into the measurement of child poverty in order to complement the purely monetary understanding of poverty. In addition, previous studies show that the overlap between income poverty and material deprivation is small (Notten & Mendelson, 2016). Measurement based solely on one single dimension is far from sufficient to understand poverty, which may exclude a large proportion of children in low living conditions (Israel & Spannagel, 2013). Consequently, three major indicators are selected to represent children's economic well-being in this thesis.

Child monetary poverty. Taking the advantage of the EU-SILC data, which provides more detailed information regarding income from different resources, child monetary poverty can be further separated to two indicators: pre- and post-taxes and transfers child poverty. The post-taxes and transfers child poverty is measured by using the total disposable income and; the pre-taxes and transfers child poverty is computed by applying the total original income (before tax deduction and social transfers). The total disposable income (HY020) is available in the EU-SILC user's data and measured as the sum of gross income components at the household level[25], plus gross personal

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[25] The gross income at the household level consists of income from rental of a property or land (HY040G); family/children related allowances (HY050G); social exclusion not elsewhere classified (HY060G); housing allowances (HY070G); regular inter-household cash transfers received (HY080G); interests, dividends, profit from capital investments in unincorporated business (HY090G); income received by people aged under 16 (HY110G).

income for all household members[26], and minus regular taxes on wealth (HY120G); regular inter-household cash transfer paid (HY130G); taxes on income and social insurance contributions (HY140G). Therefore, it means,

$$\text{Disposable income} = HY020 = HY040G + HY050G + HY060G + HY070G + HY080G$$
$$+ HY090G + HY110G + [\text{for all household members}]\ (PY010G + PY021G + PY050G$$
$$+ PY080G + PY090G + PY100G + PY110G + PY120G + PY130G + PY140G) -$$
$$HY120G - HY130G - HY140G$$

Note that the definition of the total disposable incomes in 2006 is slightly different from in 2014. From EU-SILC 2011 onwards, pensions received from individual private plans (PY080G) are automatically included in the computation of the total disposable income, so it is preferable to add it in 2006 to make data comparable.

The pre-taxes and transfers child poverty is measured by the total original income, that is, incomes from market resources before tax reduction and social transfers. The launching of the EU-SILC experiences a transitional stage during which the household gross income was not available in Spain till 2006; in France, Italy, Greece, and Latvia till 2007. Therefore, in order to assess the influence of taxes and transfers, the 2006 and 2014 EU-SILC data will be used for Spain, the Czech Republic, Germany, Sweden, and the UK, and the data of EU-SILC 2007 will be applied for France in the thesis. The original income is computed by the disposable income *plus* direct taxes[27] and *minus* all kinds of benefits (Atta-Darkua & Bernard, 2010). Thus,

$$\text{Original income} = HY040G + HY080G + HY090G + HY110G + [\text{for all household}$$
$$\text{members}]\ (PY010G + PY021G + PY050G)$$

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[26] The sum for all household members of gross personal income consists of gross employee cash or near cash income (PY010G); gross non-cash employee income (PY021/020G); gross cash benefits or losses from self-employment (including royalties) (PY050G); pensions received from individual private plans (PY080G); unemployment benefits (PY090G); old-age benefits (PY100G); survivor' benefits (PY110G), sickness benefits (PY120G); disability benefits (PY130G) and education-related allowances (PY140G).

[27] Direct taxes consist of regular taxes on wealth and taxes on income and social contributions. Following the previous studies (Atta-Darkua & Bernard, 2010) concerning the effects of taxes, regular inter-household transfers paid is included in direct taxes.

Although all income variables are available in the gross form, there may exist a problem regarding the consistency between countries (Brandolini, Rosolia, & Torrini, 2011). The collection of income components varies across countries. Take one important component "employee cash or near cash income", for example: It is partly collected and partly calculated from net (of tax) earnings in Spain; collected from net of tax on social contributions in Sweden and France; and collected as gross income only in Germany and the UK. When income values are not collected in the gross form, different countries use different ways to convert the net values into gross ones, for example, the microsimulation models or other statistical technique (Iacovou, Kaminska, & Levy, 2012). Thus, the inconsistency in the net-to-gross conversion procedures may cause comparability problems. Nevertheless, the taxation system may provide couples direct financial incentive to marry because the joint taxation is exclusive of married spouses (Perelli-Harris & Gassen, 2012). Therefore, direct taxes are taken into account in this study due to their key role in couples' living arrangements, but we need to bear this potential comparability problem in mind.

Relative poverty lines are commonly used in Europe and other developed countries. Unlike the absolute poverty lines which based on absolute minimum standards, relative poverty lines are measured through incomes of individuals or households in relation to that of other people in the same society. A relative poverty threshold is set by the definition of a standard of living for a given distribution of income (e.g. median or mean) and is defined as some percentages of this standard (e.g. 40%, 50%, 60%, or 70%). The standard poverty threshold applied in the Eurostat is 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income, which is available in the Eurostat database. Hence, take the disposable income for example, the calculation of equivalised disposable income (EQUINC):

$$EQUINC = \frac{(\text{Total Disposable Income} \times \text{Inflation factor})}{\text{Equivalised Household Size}} \qquad Eq.\,1$$

The calculation of the equivalised household size adopts a standard equivalence scale, the so-called "modified OECD equivalence scale". This scale gives weight of 1.0 to the first adult in the household, 0.5 to any other household member aged 14 years and above, and 0.3 to each child aged below 14. The at-risk-of-poverty threshold is set as the 60% median equivalised income. Following previous studies, the same income threshold is used in calculating the risk of poverty pre- and post- taxes and social transfers, namely, the threshold is the one based on median

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equivalised income after social transfers. Therefore, children who aged below 18 and living in households with an equivalised income below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold are regarded as poor.

Material deprivation. Material deprivation is as important as the monetary approach to assess child poverty and has attracted a growing attention in recent years. The concept of deprivation was first raised by Townsend (1987), and refers to the lack of "the material standards of diet, clothing, housing, household facilities, working, environmental and locational conditions and facilities which are orderly available in their society", and people are deprived if they "do not participate in or have access to the forms of employment, occupation, education, recreation and family and social activities and relationships which are commonly experienced or accepted" (p.140). The more recent definition of material deprivation emphasizes two core elements: "the inability for individuals or households to afford those consumption goods and activities that are typical in a society at a given point in time" and that is attributable to the lack of resources "irrespective of people's preferences with respect to these items" (OECD, 2007).

Recent discussion on how to define and measure material deprivation focuses on two main aspects: the selection of deprivation items and how to aggregate all the items into one index. First, the selection of deprivation items. According to Fusco, Guio, and Marlier (2011), an item should be chosen if it reflects "the lack of an ordinary or minimal living pattern common to a majority or large part of the population in the EU" and allow cross-national comparisons over time. The most widely used material deprivation items are nine items with respect to the observed satisfaction of needs, which consists of two dimensions — economic strain and enforced lack of durable goods (see Table 7.2). The economic strain dimension emphasizes whether some aspects of living standards are affordable — such as food, holidays, and the adequate heating of a dwelling. Moreover, the occurrence of payment arrears as one type of economic strain shows the financial problems of a household. The durables dimension provides information on the standard of living of the household in terms of the possession of durable goods. The EU-SILC allows users to distinguish between the individuals who cannot afford a certain item and those who do not have this item for other reasons (for example, personal preferences and choice). In this case, material deprivation indicates the "enforced absence" of certain items, which the household would like to possess but cannot afford them (Guio & Engsted 2007; Guio, 2009; Fusco, Guio, & Marlier, 2011).

Table 7.2: Indicators of material deprivation

Economic Strain	Variables in EU-SILC
To pay for arrears (mortgage or rent, utility bills or hire purchase instalments)	HS010, HS020, HS030
One week annual holiday away from home	HS040
A meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day	HS050
To face unexpected expenses	HS060
To keep home adequately warm	HH050
Enforced lack of durable goods	
To have a washing machine	HS100
To have a colour TV	HS080
To have a telephone	HS070
To have a personal car	HS110

Except for these two dimensions, items with regards to environmental information (vandalism, crime, and pollution) and housing conditions are often suggested being included as additive dimensions of material conditions. Factor analysis is commonly applied to select and identify deprivation items and dimensions in order to reduce the level of arbitrariness. Results show that environmental information does not have relationship with poverty or with other dimensions in that it reflects urban social problems in a society instead of just poverty (Guio & Engsted, 2007). In addition, housing conditions are suggested to play a crucial role in people's level of living condition (Atkinson et al., 2002; Marlier et al., 2007; Nolan & Whelan, 2010), including housing facilities and housing comfort (more information see Table A.2 and A.3). Nevertheless, results show that the covariance of "economic strain" and "enforced lack of durable goods" is higher than with "housing conditions", and the Cronbach alpha coefficient (measuring the internal consistency of the scale) is also higher among the first two dimensions but less satisfactory for the housing dimension. For instance, in Spain, the alpha value is 0.58 for the combined "economic strain/durables" factor compared to 0.25 for the housing dimension. Hence, Fusco, Guio, and Marlier (2013) argued that the housing dimension is so heterogeneous that should be excluded from the other two dimensions and construct a unidimensional material deprivation framework

though combining the economic strain and durable aspects. In fact, this problem has not just appeared in studies conducted by using the EU-SILC data, but other research also shows that the housing dimension is at odds with financial strain and durables (Nolan and Whelan 1996; Berthoud, Bryan, & Bardasi, 2004). Finally, another widely used definition is based on the special module on material deprivation in EU-SILC 2009 (for example, Whelan and Maître 2012), including deprivation items concerning children. However, the first wave of this module was in 2009, which is during the economic crisis and with a short time gap between the latest one (in 2014), so it is more difficult to see the evolution of parents' living arrangements.

Second, the approach to summarize the nine items in an aggregate index. There are three main approaches to set the weights for a multidimensional index of well-being such as material deprivation, that is, normative (e.g. equal or arbitrary); data-driven (e.g. frequency); and hybrid (e.g. self-stated) weighting (Decancq & Lugo, 2010). First, the normative approach depends on value judgements. The most common way used in child poverty studies is to apply the equal weight and displays the proportion of children living in materially deprived households. More exactly, each person receives a score corresponding to the number of unaffordable items that his/her household lacks. Those who lack 3 or more items (out of 9) are defined as materially deprived (e.g. Stávková, Birciakova, & Turcínková, 2012). The advantages of the equal weighting approach are to make the interpretation and cross-national comparisons simpler and to reduce the interference of researchers. But this approach is often criticized for assuming that all items are equally important. For example, some argue that the relative importance of "a meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day" is quite distinct from "a week of holidays away from home" or "a washing machine".

The data-driven and hybrid weighting are alternatives to equal weighting by giving different weights to various items in order to reflect their different importance. In the case of material deprivation, there are two main approaches: the "consensus" weighting and the "prevalence" weighting (Guio, 2009; Fusco, Guio, & Marlier, 2013). The "consensus" weighting approach is exogenous and is based on the assumption that "there is a universal minimum accepted by society that also reflects actual living conditions" (Pantazis, Townsend, & Gordon, 2006, p90), which is established by the social judgements on the items for a decent life (Mack & Lansley, 1985). The weight of a deprivation item can be the share of people considering this item (absolutely) necessary by applying the Eurobarometer data. However, the thematic module of the Eurobarometer survey

on the perception of poverty and social exclusion was carried out in 2007 and is not available every year.

The "prevalence" weighting is an endogenous, prevalence or frequency-based approach, which is viewed as "objective measures of the subjective feelings of deprivation" (Desai & Shah, 1988, p512). The underlying assumption is when an item is possessed by most people in a certain society, those who unable to afford it item are more likely to be deprived, and thus the weight of each item is computed by the share of individuals who possess it (Tsakloglou & Papadapoulos, 2002; Whelan et al., 2002; Muffels & Fouarge, 2004). The less is the frequency of deprivation for one item, a higher weight for that item is assigned. Along this line, Desai and Shah (1988) propose a weighting method for a multidimensional poverty index as the proportion of the non-deprived in the total population for the item (Alperin & Van Kerm, 2009), therefore,

$$w_i \propto (1 - \bar{x}_\iota)$$

Then, Cerioli and Zani (1990) adopt a similar weighting scheme but give a stronger weight to relatively rare items by applying the normalized logarithm of the inverse of the proportion of the deprived individuals in an item, thus,

$$w_i \propto \log(\frac{1}{\bar{x}_\iota})$$

Unequal weights reflect value judgements, which may lead to a questionable and unbalanced structure of weights and make it more difficult to explain the cross-national differences (Fusco, Guio, & Marlier, 2013). As a result, all the weighting approaches have advantages and disadvantages and there is no conclusion on which one is better than others. It is worth noting that in countries with less severe deprivation, the results of different weighting approaches are very similar; but in countries with more severe deprivation, weighting methods play a more important role because weights provide less importance to the most frequently non-possessed items. Moreover, due to the limitation of sample size, it is not proper to define the material deprivation/severally material deprivation using the traditional Eurostat method (households lack 3 out of 9 items are defined as materially deprived; 4 out of 9 are severally material deprivation). Considering that the main focus in this analysis is on Spain, with relatively higher levels of deprivation, the prevalence weighting is used to aggregate the index of material deprivation.

7.3.2 Independent variable

Parental union status. Union status was classified into three categories: married, never-married cohabitation, and other cohabitation. Although the two types of cohabitors may differ in many aspects, the distribution in child poverty is very similar (see Appendix Table A.4-Table A.7). Hence, in order to simplify the interpretation of the relationship between parents' union statuses and child poverty, never-married cohabitation and other cohabitation are combined into one category. Three original variables in the EU-SILC dataset—"marital status" (PB190), "consensual union" (PB200), and "spouse/partner ID" (PB180) are used to define cohabiting and married couples. The variable "marital status" has five categories: never married, married, separated, widowed, divorced. As these categories do not directly show whether the individual lives in a cohabiting union, the variable "consensual union" (on the legal basis, without a legal basis, not in consensual union) is adopted to identify whether the respondent is cohabiting or married. In Spain, there are a relatively small number of couples who reported never married but were living in a consensual union on the legal basis. Although the registered partnership has been introduced in some autonomous communities (e.g. Catalonia, Aragon, & Navarra), there are no legal regulations on unmarried cohabitation applicable at the state level (Jones & Merino-Blanco, 2008). Hence, these couples are classified into the cohabiting group. Furthermore, people who were living with a partner but had missing values on consensual union status were identified as cohabiting. Moreover, there are couples who provide different answers to the question of their marital status. For example, one partner reported being married but his partner who is living in the same household with him chose an answer other than married. These couples are classified as cohabiting partners considering the possible gap between the formal marital status and their actual living arrangements. The number of affected observations (e.g. 32 couples in Spain in 2014) is quite few compared with the total sample and is therefore unlikely to cause significant bias. Finally, those who answered all the three original questions, but the information of his/her partner is not available in the database are excluded in the analysis. In sum, cohabitors refer to those who are living with a partner outside of marriage at the same household, and married people are defined as couples when both partners reported being "married" and living in the same household.

Due to the lack of a comprehensive household grid, parents cannot be identified directly. The pointer variables such as the identification (ID) number of father (RB220) and mother (RB230), as well as the variable "household type" (HX060) are applied to identify parents. According to the

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classification of HX060, dependent children refer to not only individuals aged below 18 years, but also those aged 18-24 years if they are economically inactive and living with at least one parent. Nevertheless, minor children (aged below 18 years) are more likely to live with their parents, and their economic resources mainly or completely depend on their parents in almost all countries. Therefore, in this thesis children are meant to be household members aged younger than 18 years. In addition, if the personal ID of an adult is the same as the ID of a child's mother/father in the same household, they are defined as parents, including biological, step-, foster, and adoptive parents due to the data limitation. Concerned that biological parents cannot be distinguished from other types of parents, those who do not have children but living with children of the partner are identified as parents as well.

Father's and mother's education. Education levels were classified into three groups — low, middle, and high. The original variable from the EU-SILC "highest ISCED level attained" (PE040) is used, which refers to the highest level of education that a person has successfully completed. It consists of six categories: pre-primary education, primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education, post-secondary non-tertiary education, the first stage (not leading directly to an advanced research qualification) and the second stage (leading to an advanced research qualification) of tertiary education. The categories created by EU-SILC are based on the International Standard of Education (ISCED 1997) and are coded according to the seven ISCED-97 categories (Eurostat, 2009). The aggregation of the six levels of educational levels into three categories recommended by Schneider and Müller (2009) is adopted in this analysis. They argue that this classification yields fairly stable categories for comparisons between different survey waves. As a result, the low education group comprises of individuals with less than primary education, primary education, and lower secondary education. It is noteworthy that the higher share of missing values in PE040 are attributed to persons who have never been in education in EU-SILC 2006 (coded -2 in the flag variable PE040_F), and for this reason they are grouped into the low education category. The middle education category includes people with upper secondary education and post-secondary non-tertiary education. The high education group contains people with a university degree including the first stage and second stage of tertiary education. As the representativeness of education is concerned, Katchadourian and Cambois (2013) analyzed distributions of respondents by education level using data from the Labour Force Survey as reference data because the latter covers a wider base of respondents. Although they found that the

weights provided by the EU-SILC can narrow the discrepancies with the reference data, they still persist in many countries. Overall, low education levels tend to be underrepresented in Spain, France, Sweden, the UK, and the higher educated are over-represented in Spain and Sweden.

Father's and mother's employment status. The employment status was categorized into five types: full-time employed, part-time employed, self-employed, unemployed, and inactive. Most studies only used the status of employment, including employed, unemployed, and inactive, but the impacts of other important dimensions such as the condition and quality of jobs are not clear. Considering the dramatic growth in in-work poverty and job precariousness, more aspects of employment should be applied to explore the relationship between parental economic resources and children's economic well-being. Part-time jobs are often seen as bad jobs with poor quality in terms of the required skills, remuneration, and career opportunities (Kalleberg, 2000; Lohmann, 2001). Although the incidence of part-time employment in Spain is not as high as in other European countries (below the EU average), the rate of involuntariness is above the average (Leschke & Watt, 2008). Hence, part-time employment tends to spur job insecurity and then economic insecurity (Burgoon & Dekker, 2010), especially for male workers. Self-employment is viewed as an approach out of unemployment in countries with poor conditions in the labor market (EEOR, 2010). Countries with a particularly high concentration of agricultural, service-based and informal work often have a greater share of self-employed workers such as in Spain. Research suggests that individuals who are disadvantaged in the labor market tend to become self-employed (Hatfield, 2015). Although self-employed workers may enjoy more freedom and flexibility, they are subject to greater economic instability and insecurity and lack basic employment rights.

The original variables "self-defined current economic status" (PL030) and "status in employment" (PL040) from the EU-SILC are used to define the employment status. The variable PL030 is the self-defined current economic status reported by respondents that contains nine groups: work full-time, work part-time, unemployed, student (includes pupil at school, those who in training or unpaid work experience), in retirement or in early retirement or has given up business, permanently disabled or/and unfit to work, fulfilling domestic tasks or care responsibilities, other inactive person. The variable PL040 includes four categories: self-employed employee, self-employed without employee, employee, and family worker. These two variables are adopted to categorize workers into part-time, full-time, and self-employed workers. The "unemployed"

category is coded as in PL030. Students, retired persons, disabled, those who fulfill domestic tasks, and other inactive person are merged and recoded as "inactive".

Father's and mother's contract type. The employment contract is classified into three types: permanent, temporary, and all others, following the categorization used by Vignoli, Drefahl, and De Santis (2012). This variable is generated based on the "type of contract" (PL140) in the EU-SILC data. The incidence of temporary or fixed-term contracts has substantially increased in Europe, which constitutes a source of job insecurity and precariousness. Differing from the traditional, regular employment relationship, temporary or fixed-term contracts are related with less employment protection, higher risks of unemployment, less-favourable pay and working conditions, lower bargaining position, and higher economic insecurity. Therefore, employed workers with temporary or fixed-term contracts are more prone to be poor compared to those with permanent contracts (Burgoon & Dekker, 2010).

Table 7.3: Proportion of unemployment, temporary job of partnered men and women aged 20-64 by educational levels in Spain, in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014		
Education	low	middle	high	low	middle	high
Unemployment						
men	7.2	3.7	2.1	26.2	16.3	10.0
women	9.4	9.4	6.6	26.6	24.8	14.7
Temporary job						
men	27.9	14.3	9.5	35.4	26.1	15.2
women	49.0	37.4	27.1	50.2	35.4	24.2

Note: Data are weighted

As shown in Table 7.3, the gap in the proportion of temporary contracts among highly-education Spanish men only increased from 9.5% in 2006 to 15.2% in 2014, but the increase among middle-educated men was substantial, from 14.3% in 2006 to 26.1% in 2014. It implies a greater decline in the employment quality that may have happened to modestly-educated men rather than those with the lowest or highest education. Hence, if we only use unemployment status to complement education to represent the economic situation, a lot of information on job precariousness and labor market vulnerability would be missed.

Father's and mother's age. Parents are categorized into two groups: those aged 20-39 and those aged 40-64. The interviews of EU-SILC took place throughout the year but in different time points across regions and nations (Eurostat, 2016). Hence, the variable "age at the end of the income reference period" (RX020) is more precise to identify the respondent's age. The "income reference period" refers to a fixed 12-month period of the previous calendar year for all countries except for the UK, for which it means the current year. There are two major reasons to choose 39 as the age threshold: first, a considerable part of young adults is still in education at their early 30s in most European countries (Couppié & Mansuy, 2003). Some scholars suggest that 30s is an appropriate threshold because a large proportion of people at their 30s should still be considered labor market entrants given that the acquisition of a relatively stable position in the labor market takes years (Häusermann, Kurer, & Schwander, 2014). Second, proportions of men having a managerial and supervisory occupation by different age groups, namely, the so-called "career curve" (Bygren & Gähler, 2012), start out at very low level in their 20s, peak in the early 40s, and then slightly decline thereafter. In addition, children with older mothers are more likely to be economically advantaged, because older mothers tend to have high education, hold better and well-paid career positions, and have a stable relationship. Children whose mother is above the age of 39 have much lower poverty risks than those living with younger parents in many EU nations (Maquet-Engsted, 2012, p216).

Father's and mother's migrant background. Migrants exhibit higher poverty risks than domestic country citizens (Botti, Corsi, & D'Ippoliti, 2012). Children with migrant parents are at greater risks of poverty than children whose parents were native born. It is worth to note that even in the Nordic countries, where rates of child poverty are generally low, and the society is relatively equal, children of migrants have much higher risks of income poverty and deprivation in comparison with children whose parents were native born. The variable "country of birth" (PB210) is adopted to define the migrant background of parents. This variable has two categories: same as country of residence, others except the country of residence.

Number of children. The EU-SILC survey does not directly report information on the number of children in each household. Identifier variables "father ID" (RB230) and "mother ID" (RB230) were employed to identify parents. Furthermore, the age of children (RX020) is available in the Personal Register file. By using the three variables, the number of children living with parents in the household can be identified. There is a strong association between child poverty and the

number of children living in the household (Townsend, 1979; Gordon et al., 2000; Bradshaw et al., 2006), more exactly, the more children in the family, the lower the standard of living.

7.4   Methods

7.4.1 Empirical analysis in the micro-level

Two waves of the EU-SILC, one before the Great Recession (2006) and a more recent one during the crisis (2014), are used to conduct the analysis. Six countries are included in the analysis (the selection of countries has been explicitly discussed in Chapter 1): Spain, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Sweden, and the UK. Weights provided by the EU-SILC are employed in the analysis in order to correct biases caused by sampling schemes and missing data.

To investigate the association between child poverty risks and parents' union status, I consider all households consisting of both parents who were aged 20-64 and living with at least one child. Taking advantage of the EU-SILC data, I can compare the economic conditions of both parents at the same time. First of all, I compare the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of married parents and cohabiting parents in each of the six studied countries in 2006 and 2014. The economic conditions of fathers and mothers are described through variables regarding their educational levels and employment situation by their union status. Then, disparities in the risk of child poverty between married- and cohabiting-parent families are illustrated in each nation in 2006 and 2014. More exactly, the risk of child poverty consists of three indicators: monetary poverty before including taxes and transfers, monetary poverty after including taxes and transfers, and material deprivation.

The multivariate analysis aims to investigate whether the gap in the risk of child poverty between cohabiting- and married-parent households is attributed to living arrangements or the selection effect. I will examine the association between parents' union status and risks of child poverty in terms of monetary aspect (including before and after taxes and transfers, separately) in each of the six European countries by applying a binary logistic regression. Considering the different characteristics of material deprivation compared with the monetary poverty, the ordinary least-squares regression will be used to estimate the relationship between children's risks of material deprivation and living arrangements in Spain and the other five countries. Three models are used in each country, Model 1 examines the association between parents' union status and

child poverty risks, that is, whether child poverty risks differ by their living arrangements. Then, controls are introduced for the observed set of demographic variables in Model 2 in order to see whether the disparities in child poverty risks between cohabiting- and married-parent households remained after adjustment for demographic factors. Then, fathers' and mothers' socioeconomic characteristics are included in Model 3, testing whether disparities in education and employment situation between married and cohabiting parents account for differences in poverty risks of children by parental union statuses. Finally, the comparison of results in 2006 and 2014 by the inclusion of the interaction between parental union status and year of observation explores whether and how the disparities in child poverty between married- and cohabiting-parent families change before and during the Great Recession in Spain compared with other European countries.

7.4.2 Decomposition of the international differences in overall child poverty rate

Differences in child poverty risks (calculated by using household incomes after taxes and transfers) between Spain and a given country are decomposed into the contributions of market income, the distribution of children by parental union status, and the contributions of the tax and transfers. I follow the study of Heuveline and Weinshenker (2008) using the technique of standardization and decomposition developed by Das Gupta.

Das Gupta's method for cross-classified data (i.e. rates) is based on developments in standardization and decomposition technique. Starting from Kitagawa (1955) who developed a formal procedure for decomposing the difference between the overall rates in two populations, her work deals with "finding the additive contributions of the effects of the differences in the compositional or rate factors in two populations to the difference in their overall rates" (Das Gupta, 1993, p1). Then, this technique has been further developed with no limitation of the number of factors and the simultaneous considerations of over two populations. Das Gupta (1993) generalizes the technique that imposes few constraints on the nature of the variables and distributions and, thereby makes it more flexible to most cross-classified aggregate data. In addition, Das Gupta's approach yields stable results regardless of the order in which factors are introduced with no need of special treatment for interaction terms (Li, 2017). In addition, compared with the statistical modeling approach, this method involves no interaction effects and makes the results easier to interpret.

Following the method used by Heuveline and Weinshenker (2008), the equations and detailed steps are shown below:

Suppose rate R is the overall child poverty rate in Spain, so

$$R = \Sigma\, D_i \times R_i \qquad\qquad Eq.2$$

D_i is the percentage of children in parental union type i in Spain. Hence, D_1 is the percentage of children in married-parent households and D_2 is the proportion of children in cohabiting-parent households. R_i is the child poverty rate assessed by using the household income after taxes and transfers in union type i in Spain. Finally, the Σ means the sum of cohabiting-parent and married-parent households. Then, R is further presented as

$$R = \Sigma\, D_i \times B_i \times \left(\frac{R_i}{B_i}\right) \qquad\qquad Eq.3$$

In this equation, B_i is the poverty rate assessed by using the household income before taxes and transfers in union type i in Spain. Therefore, B_1 is the pre-tax (and transfers, hereafter pre-tax in short) child poverty rate among children in married-parent households and B_2 is the pre-tax child poverty rate among children in cohabiting-parent households.

A_i is defined as the ratio of the post-tax child poverty rate to the pre-tax child poverty rate for children in union type i in Spain.

$$R = \Sigma\, D_i \times B_i \times A_i \qquad\qquad Eq.4$$

Until now, we can know the contribution of the differences in children's living arrangements the child poverty gap between Spain and a given country (D) but the contribution of market income and effect of taxes and transfers are unclear. Therefore, the equation should be further decomposed, I define

$$U_i = \frac{B_i}{B_1} \qquad\qquad Eq.5$$

$$W_i = \frac{A_i}{A_1} \qquad\qquad Eq.6$$

U_i is the pre-tax child poverty rate in union type i relative to the pre-tax child poverty rate of married-parent households in Spain. W_i is the ratio of the post-tax child poverty rate to the pre-tax child poverty rate among children in union type i relative to the same ratio among children in married-parent families in Spain. So, the equation is

$$R = B_1 \times A_1 \times \Sigma D_i \times U_i \times W_i \qquad\qquad Eq.7$$

If I define r is the overall child poverty rate in a given country (the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Sweden, the UK),

$$r = b_1 \times a_1 \times \Sigma d_i \times u_i \times w_i \qquad\qquad Eq.8$$

The gap in child poverty risk between Spain and a given country can be decomposed into five factors:

$$r - R = F_\beta + F_\mu + F_\delta + F_\alpha + F_\omega \qquad\qquad Eq.9$$

The equations for five factors of Das Gupta (1993) are not directly adopted by Heuveline and Weinshenker (2008). In the case of three factors in the formula of Das Gupta (1993),

$$p - P = F_\alpha + F_\beta + F_\sigma \qquad\qquad Eq.10$$

$$F_\alpha = \left[\frac{b_1 c_1 + B_1 C_1}{3} + \frac{b_1 C_1 + B_1 c_1}{6}\right] \times (a_1 - A_1) \qquad\qquad Eq.11$$

$$F_\beta = \left[\frac{a_1 c_1 + A_1 C_1}{3} + \frac{a_1 C_1 + A_1 c_1}{6}\right] \times (b_1 - B_1) \qquad\qquad Eq.12$$

$$F_\sigma = \left[\frac{a_1 b_1 + A_1 B_1}{3} + \frac{a_1 B_1 + A_1 b_1}{6}\right] \times (c_1 - C_1) \qquad\qquad Eq.13$$

Heuveline and Weinshenker (2008) revised the equations by defining $c_1 = \Sigma d_i \times u_i \times w_i$ and $C_1 = \Sigma D_i \times U_i \times W_i$. Therefore, they decomposed the $(c_1 - C_1)$,

$$(c_1 - C_1) = f_\eta + f_\theta + f_\varepsilon \qquad\qquad Eq.14$$

$$f_\mu = \left[\frac{\Sigma\, d_i \times u_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, d_i \times U_i \times w_i) + (\Sigma\, D_i \times u_i \times W_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times U_i \times W_i)}{3} \right]$$
$$+ \left[\frac{\Sigma\, d_i \times u_i \times W_i - \Sigma\, d_i \times U_i \times W_i) + (\Sigma\, D_i \times u_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times U_i \times w_i)}{6} \right] \qquad Eq.\,15$$

$$f_\delta = \left[\frac{\Sigma\, d_i \times u_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times u_i \times w_i) + (\Sigma\, d_i \times U_i \times W_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times U_i \times W_i)}{3} \right]$$
$$+ \left[\frac{\Sigma\, d_i \times u_i \times W_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times u_i \times W_i) + (\Sigma\, d_i \times U_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times U_i \times w_i)}{6} \right] \qquad Eq.\,16$$

$$f_\omega = \left[\frac{\Sigma\, d_i \times u_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, d_i \times u_i \times W_i) + (\Sigma\, D_i \times U_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times U_i \times W_i)}{3} \right]$$
$$+ \left[\frac{\Sigma\, d_i \times U_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, d_i \times U_i \times W_i) + (\Sigma\, D_i \times u_i \times w_i - \Sigma\, D_i \times u_i \times W_i)}{6} \right] \qquad Eq.\,17$$

Therefore, in our analysis, F_α is as same as defined in Eq.11, and F_β as Eq.12, and

$$F_\mu = \left[\frac{a_1 b_1 + A_1 B_1}{3} + \frac{a_1 B_1 + A_1 b_1}{6} \right] \times f_\mu \qquad Eq.\,18$$

$$F_\delta = \left[\frac{a_1 b_1 + A_1 B_1}{3} + \frac{a_1 B_1 + A_1 b_1}{6} \right] \times f_\delta \qquad Eq.\,19$$

$$F_\omega = \left[\frac{a_1 b_1 + A_1 B_1}{3} + \frac{a_1 B_1 + A_1 b_1}{6} \right] \times f_\omega \qquad Eq.\,20$$

Chapter 8 Descriptive results

8.1   The risk of child poverty by union status

As stated in Chapter 7, child poverty risks consist of three indicators: monetary poverty after taxes and transfers, monetary poverty before taxes and transfers, and material deprivation. Table 8.1 shows the share of the risk of child poverty after taxes and transfers among households headed by married and cohabiting parents in the six European countries in 2006 and 2014.

Table 8.1: Percentage of poverty (monetary poverty in total) among married- and cohabiting-parent households in the six European countries, in 2006 and 2014

		2006			2014		
		Married	Cohabiting	Total	Married	Cohabiting	Total
Spain	not poverty	80.6	84.0	80.8	74.6	68.1**	73.8
	at poverty	19.4	16.0	19.2	25.4	32.0	26.2
Czech	not poverty	90.4	79.2***	89.3	93.0	86.5*	91.7
	at poverty	9.6	20.8	10.7	7.0	13.5	8.3
Germany	not poverty	87.7	76.6***	86.8	89.7	75.1***	88.1
	at poverty	12.3	23.4	13.3	10.3	24.9	11.9
France†	not poverty	87.4	87.7	87.5	88.4	86.8	87.8
	at poverty	12.6	12.3	12.5	11.6	13.2	12.2
Sweden	not poverty	91.7	92.6	92.0	89.9	90.7	90.1
	at poverty	8.3	7.4	8.0	10.1	9.3	9.9
UK	not poverty	85.4	75.7***	83.9	85.7	83.0	85.1
	at poverty	14.6	24.4	16.1	14.4	17.0	14.9

Note: Data are weighted. Households include parents both aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
†Data for France are from 2007 because gross income was not available in France until 2007.

In general, the risks of child poverty among cohabiting-parent families are higher than among married-parent families in all the countries except for Sweden in 2014. Moreover, the proportion of child poverty increased from 2006 to 2014 in Spain and Sweden. It is noteworthy that the rise in the child poverty risk is much greater in Spain (from 19.2% to 26.2%) than in Sweden (from 8% to 9.9%). In particular, child poverty risks of cohabiting-parent households doubled from 2006 to 2014, which contributes to a larger proportion of the increase in child poverty risks in Spain compared to married-parent households.

Table 8.2: Percentage of poverty (monetary poverty before taxes and transfers) among married- and cohabiting-parent households in the six European countries, in 2006 and 2014

		2006			2014		
		Married	Cohabiting	Total	Married	Cohabiting	Total
Spain	not poverty	83.0	81.2	82.8	70.4	67.3*	70.0
	at poverty	17.1	18.8	17.2	29.6	32.7	30.0
Czech	not poverty	85.5	70.0***	84.0	88.5	76.5***	86.2
	at poverty	14.6	30.0	16.0	11.5	23.5	13.8
Germany	not poverty	82.5	68.3***	81.3	88.3	71.6***	86.4
	at poverty	17.5	31.7	18.7	11.7	28.4	13.6
France†	not poverty	82.4	81.6	82.2	83.2	82.6	83.0
	at poverty	17.6	18.4	17.8	16.8	17.4	17.0
Sweden	not poverty	86.8	86.7	86.8	86.9	84.4	86.1
	at poverty	13.2	13.3	13.2	13.1	15.6	14.0
UK	not poverty	84.2	73.1***	82.5	79.9	73.0**	78.5
	at poverty	15.8	27.0	17.6	20.1	27.0	21.5

Note: Data are weighted. Households include parents both aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
†Data for France are from 2007.

Taxes and social transfers contribute to combat the child poverty. Comparisons between Table 8.1 and 8.2 show that the contribution of taxes and transfers to the decline of child poverty is greater in countries with more generous social welfare such as Sweden than in countries with lower social welfare such as Spain. It is noteworthy that the UK makes a great effort to tackle child poverty in the recent decade, as can be seen in the tables, the post-tax and transfers child poverty risks are obviously reduced compared to pre-tax and transfers child poverty in 2014, by 6.6 percentage points, and the degree was even higher than in Sweden (4.1 percentage points). Furthermore, the disparities between post- and pre-tax and transfers poverty rates increased in Spain from 2006 to 2014, indicating that the contribution of taxes and transfers to the reduction of child poverty may have improved despite the fact that the absolute decrease is still lower than in other countries (e.g. 3.8 percentage points in Spain relative to 4.8 percentage points in Germany in 2014). In addition, the gap in child monetary poverty risks between cohabiting- and married-parent households is greater pre- than post-tax and transfers in all the countries except for Spain and France in 2014. Considering that children enjoy same rights and benefits irrespective of their parents' marital status in EU countries (specifically explained in Chapter 3), it is possible that children in cohabiting-

parent families may rely more on social welfare than those living with married parents due to the lower economic status of their parents.

In comparison with other European countries, children in Spain have higher rated of monetary poverty risks (both before and after taxes and transfers), and the increase in child poverty rates in Spain is greater than in other countries over time. Thus, Spanish children have become more vulnerable economically after the Great Recession compared to children in Germany, France, Sweden, the Czech Republic, and the UK, which corresponds to the fact that Spain was more strongly hit by the crisis. Moreover, in Spain, the diversity in rates of child monetary poverty between cohabiting- and married-parent families tended to be smaller than that in many other countries in 2006, but it rapidly increased in 2014. Hence, it is possible that children in households headed by cohabiting parents may be more vulnerable to outside economic shocks than their counterparts in married-parent households.

Table 8.3 shows the distribution of the number of unafforadable material deprivation items among married- and cohabiting-parent households in the six European countries in 2006 and 2014. Households headed by cohabiting parents have a higher proportion of lacking deprivation items than those headed by married parents in all the studied nations. For instance, in Spain, the proportion of cohabiting-parent households without unaffordable deprivation items was 42.1% compared to 56.5% of married-parent households in 2006, and 32.4% compared to 49% in 2014. In Sweden, 77.4% of cohabiting-parent households reported no shortage of any deprivation items relative to 78.2% of married-parent households in 2006, and 83.3% compared to 81.8% of cohabiting-parent households in 2014. Moreover, the proportion of lacking at least one material deprivation item increased from 2006 to 2014 among both cohabiting- and married-parent households in Spain (by 9.7 percentage points and by 7.5 percentage points, respectively) and the UK (by 15.5 percentage points and by 15.2 percentage points, respectively). In addition, the severity of material deprivation (lacking at least four deprivation items) of both cohabiting- and married-parent households increased over time in Spain (by 1.8 percentage points and by 4 percentage points, respectively) and the UK (by 4.5 percentage points and by 2 percentage points, respectively). Nevertheless, the disparity between the two living arrangements reduced in Spain (from 7.6 percentage points in 2006 to 5.4 percentage points in 2014). Oppositely, it increased in the UK, from 3.2 percentage points in 2006 to 5.7 percentage points in 2014.

Table 8.3: Distribution of the number of unaffordable material deprivation items among married- and cohabiting-parent households, by country, in 2006 and 2014 (%)

		2006				2014			
		married	cohabiting	total	Sig.	married	cohabiting	total	Sig.
Spain	0	56.5	42.1	55.6	***	49.0	32.4	47.1	***
	1	19.5	17.7	19.4		15.2	19.1	15.7	
	2	14.6	16.7	14.7		18.4	21.8	18.8	
	3	6.7	13.4	7.2		10.7	14.7	11.2	
	>=4	2.7	10.3	3.2		6.7	12.1	7.4	
Czech	0	47.7	27.5	45.9	***	54.2	43.7	52.2	**
	1	22.1	20.6	22.0		17.5	18.6	17.7	
	2	14.3	19.9	14.9		16.9	16.4	16.8	
	3	8.5	18.3	9.4		7.6	10.1	8.1	
	>=4	7.4	13.7	8.0		3.9	11.2	5.3	
Germany	0	50.1	33.8	48.7	***	64.2	50.1	62.6	***
	1	21.5	27.8	22.0		19.0	19.4	19.0	
	2	17.3	19.9	17.5		10.2	14.6	10.7	
	3	7.6	14.6	8.2		4.3	10.4	5.0	
	>=4	3.6	3.9	3.6		2.4	5.5	2.7	
France†	0	60.2	47.8	56.9	***	62.0	53.6	59.0	**
	1	18.2	22.4	19.3		17.9	22.5	19.5	
	2	12.3	15.3	13.1		11.6	13.1	12.2	
	3	6.3	11.0	7.6		5.9	7.6	6.5	
	>=4	3.0	3.6	3.2		2.7	3.1	2.8	
Sweden	0	78.2	77.4	77.9		83.3	81.8	82.8	
	1	12.4	14.2	13.0		9.5	12.4	10.4	
	2	4.7	5.1	4.8		4.4	4.4	4.4	
	3	3.3	2.9	3.1		1.8	1.1	1.6	
	>=4	1.6	0.4	1.2		1.1	0.4	0.8	
UK	0	69.5	50.3	66.4	***	54.3	34.8	50.3	***
	1	14.0	18.5	14.7		19.9	25.6	21.1	
	2	10.0	17.4	11.2		14.4	17.8	15.1	
	3	4.5	8.6	5.1		7.2	12.0	8.2	
	>=4	2.1	5.3	2.6		4.1	9.8	5.2	

Note: Data are weighted. Households include parents both aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
†Data for France are from 2007.

8.2 The demographic profiles of cohabiting and married parents

In order to understand why the economic well-being of children living in cohabiting-parent households is often lower than their counterparts in married-parent households, I will at first compare the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of cohabiting parents with that of married parents. All missing data are presented in the Appendix Table A.8. Considering that parents' economic resources may differ by their age and migrant background, I compared the differences in the demographic profiles between married and cohabiting parents.

Table 8.4: The demographic profiles of married and cohabiting fathers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

			2006			2014		
			married	cohabiting	Sig.	married	cohabiting	Sig.
Spain	Mean age		41.9	37.5		43.8	38.8	
	Birth place	native	93.3	82.2	***	83.8	74.7	***
		others	6.8	17.9		16.2	25.3	
Czech	Mean age		38.7	35.5		40.8	38.1	
	Birth place	native	96.9	96.3		95.2	92.7	
		others	3.1	3.7		4.8	7.3	
Germany	Mean age		42.5	38.0		43.8	39.2	
	Birth place	native	92.0	96.3		89.1	88.3	
		others	8.0	3.7		10.9	11.7	
France†	Mean age		42.1	37.6		43.1	38.5	
	Birth place	native	82.2	93.1	***	84.9	94.8	***
		others	17.8	6.9		15.1	5.2	
Sweden	Mean age		43.3	37.8		43.4	41.1	
	Birth place	native	83.0	91.8	***	80.7	88.0	***
		others	17.0	7.3		19.3	12.0	
UK	Mean age		42.1	37.0		42.2	37.4	
	Birth place	native	84.6	96.0	***	75.5	89.5	***
		others	15.4	4.1		24.5	10.5	

Note: Data are weighted. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.05$, *$p < 0.1$.
†Data for France are from 2007.

As shown in Table 8.4, cohabiting fathers are in general younger than married fathers in all the six nations. Moreover, the mean age of both married and cohabiting fathers increased from 2006 to

2014. The age gap between married and cohabiting fathers rose from 2006 to 2014 in Spain (from 4.4 to 5 years), Germany (from 4.5 to 4.6 years), and France (from 4.5 to 4.6 years), but it declined in Sweden (from 5.5 to 2.3 years), the UK (from 5.1 to 4.8 years), and the Czech Republic (from 3.2 to 2.7 years). Thus, cohabitation may have increasingly become a common context for childrearing rather than a childless stage prior to marriage in Spain. The proportions of married fathers who are foreign-born were higher than that of cohabiting fathers in all the studied nations except for Spain (6.8% of married fathers and 17.9% of cohabiting fathers in 2006 and; 16.2% and 25.3% repectively in 2014) and the Czech Republic (3.1% of married fathers and 3.7% of cohabiting fathers and; 4.8% and 7.3% respectively in 2014). Moreover, Although the rise in the share of married fathers (by 9.4 percentage points) with migrant background was greater than that of cohabiting fathers (by 7.4 percentage points) from 2006 to 2014 in Spain, the share of cohabiting fathers was still far more above their married counterparts.

Table 8.5: The demographic profiles of married and cohabiting mothers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

| | | | 2006 | | | 2014 | | |
			married	cohabiting	Sig.	married	cohabiting	Sig.
Spain	Mean age		39.3	34.8		41.3	36.1	
	Birth place	native	92.4	84.1	***	82.1	77.2	***
		others	7.6	15.9		17.9	22.8	
Czech	Mean age		35.8	32.6		38.0	35.1	
	Birth place	native	96.7	95.8		95.9	96.8	
		others	3.3	4.2		4.1	3.2	
Germany	Mean age		39.6	35.9		40.9	36.5	
	Birth place	native	91.7	96.9	**	88.3	94.6	**
		others	8.3	3.1		11.7	5.4	
France†	Mean age		39.5	35.2		40.5	36.4	
	Birth place	native	83.9	94.7	***	85.1	95.3	***
		others	16.2	5.3		15.0	4.7	
Sweden	Mean age		40.6	35.7		40.7	38.6	
	Birth place	native	82.1	90.8	***	78.9	89.1	***
		others	17.9	9.2		21.1	10.9	
UK	Mean age		39.7	34.8		39.6	34.5	
	Birth place	native	84.3	94.2	***	73.6	91.4	***
		others	15.7	5.8		26.4	8.6	

Note: Data are weighted. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1. †Data for France are from 2007.

Cohabiting mothers are younger than married mothers in all the six European countries (see Table 8.5). For instance, in Spain, the mean age of married mothers was 39 years compared to 34 years of cohabiting mothers in 2006. Moreover, the mean age of both married and cohabiting mothers increased from 2006 to 2014, which may be related to the trend of the postponement of childbearing. In 2014, the mean age of married mothers reached around 40 years, and that of cohabiting mothers was above 36 years in most of the studied nations. In addition, the rise of married mothers' age on average was greater than the increase of cohabiting mothers in Spain (2 years and 1.3 years, respectively) and Germany (1.3 years and 0.6 year, respectively).

Foreign-born women had higher proportions of being married mothers relative to cohabiting mothers in Germany, France, Sweden, and the UK in 2006 and 2014, plus the Czech Republic in 2014. This result has also been shown in previous studies as well (Huddleston, Niessen, & Tjaden, 2013). Oppositely, Spanish women with a migrant background had a higher share of being cohabiting mothers (15.9% in 2006 and 22.8% in 2014) relative to being married ones (7.6% in 2006 and 17.9% in 2014). Moreover, the growth of the proportion of married mothers who are foreign-born was higher than that of cohabiting mothers between 2006 and 2014 in Spain (10.4 relative to 6.9 percentage points), Germany (3.4 relative to 2.3 percentage points), and Sweden (3.2 relative to 1.7 percentage points).

8.3   The socioeconomic characteristics of cohabiting and married parents

The socioeconomic divergence between marriage and cohabitation has been growingly linked to the increased economic inequality, in particular to the deteriorating employment and earnings prospects of less-educated men. Many studies from the US have found a troubling divergence in the partnership formation according to couples' socioeconomic characteristics, with more stable family structure among the highest-educated while more fragile forms of union among the less-educated (e.g. McLanahan, 2004). It seems that people with different economic conditions tend to follow divergent paths through partnership formation and dissolution. In addition, shifts in family demographics have further exacerbated social class disparities in children's access to economic resources, which are known as "diverging destinies" by McLanahan (2004), or "bifurcation of American family" by Cherlin (2010).

Men often take more economic responsibilities of households, and their economic conditions and prospects may play an important role in family behavior and well-being. In Europe, and also in other Western countries, the employment structure has been changing in the recent decades that "rising relative demand in well-paid skilled jobs (that typically require nonroutine cognitive skills) and in low-paid least-skilled jobs (that typically require nonroutine manual skills) and falling relative demand in the 'middling' jobs that have typically required routine manual and cognitive skills" (Goos & Manning, 2007, p118). Compared with women, men are more affected by the globalization and the job polarization because the industries they used to work have been gradually replaced by technology or workers from other countries, while the industries where women used to work such as services were not significantly influenced. Considering the rise in job precariousness and in labor market vulnerability, more emphasis should be put on the job quality rather than only on employment/nonemployment and education, in particular for fathers.

Table 8.6: The distribution of educational levels among married and cohabiting fathers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

		2006				2014			
		married	cohabiting	total	Sig.	married	cohabiting	total	Sig.
Spain	Low	47.7	50.8	47.9		41.5	39.4	41.3	***
	Middle	25.3	20.3	25.0		23.0	29.8	23.8	
	High	26.7	28.9	26.9		35.3	28.9	34.6	
Czech	Low	3.7	12.3	4.5	***	2.7	11.2	4.4	***
	Middle	80.6	75.5	80.1		73.4	74.7	73.6	
	High	15.8	12.3	15.5		23.9	14.1	22.0	
Germany	Low	5.8	8.6	6.0	***	5.7	9.2	6.1	**
	Middle	55.7	62.5	56.3		47.6	54.4	48.4	
	High	38.5	29.0	37.7		46.7	36.4	45.6	
France†	Low	22.4	23.4	22.7	*	13.9	11.5	13.0	**
	Middle	48.6	54.1	50.1		48.4	58.6	52.1	
	High	28.8	22.3	27.0		35.6	27.8	32.8	
Sweden	Low	13.1	10.7	12.3	***	10.4	11.1	10.7	***
	Middle	54.0	66.6	58.3		44.9	58.8	49.6	
	High	32.4	22.0	28.8		43.9	28.8	38.8	
UK	Low	16.9	19.6	17.3	**	24.1	35.5	26.4	***
	Middle	37.0	45.6	38.4		28.5	37.9	30.4	
	High	32.8	21.3	31.0		45.3	23.2	40.8	

Note: Data are weighted, and missing data are taken into account. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1. †Data for France are from 2007.

Married fathers were more likely to have a high level of education than cohabiting fathers in all the studied nations in 2006 (except for Spain) and 2014 (shown in Table 8.6). Moreover, fathers with a middle education account for the majority of fathers in countries other than Spain. Cohabiting fathers were more likely to have a middle education than their married counterparts except for Spain and the Czech Republic in 2006, in which the proportion of cohabiting fathers who have middle education was lower than that of married fathers (20.3% relative to 25.3% in Spain, 75.5% relative to 80.6% in the Czech Republic). It is noteworthy that the educational gradient of Spanish fathers was negative in 2014, indicating that the probability of being a cohabiting father decreases with the growth of fathers' education. Over time, married fathers are more influenced by the trend of the rise in educational attainments in Spain than cohabiting fathers, the percentage of married fathers with a high educational attainment increased from 26.7% in 2006 to 35.3% in 2014, while that of cohabiting fathers remained stable.

Table 8.7: The distribution of educational levels among married and cohabiting mothers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

		2006				2014			
		married	cohabiting	total	Sig.	married	cohabiting	total	Sig.
Spain	Low	46.3	45.9	46.3		35.7	37.9	36.0	***
	Middle	23.5	23.3	23.5		21.2	25.9	21.8	
	High	30.2	30.9	30.2		42.9	35.8	42.1	
Czech	Low	6.7	16.9	7.6	***	4.6	9.6	5.6	***
	Middle	79.2	73.2	78.6		68.6	73.7	69.6	
	High	14.1	10.0	13.7		26.8	16.7	24.8	
Germany	Low	9.1	8.9	9.1		7.8	8.7	7.9	
	Middle	62.3	55.4	61.7		61.3	65.6	61.8	
	High	28.7	35.8	29.3		30.9	25.7	30.3	
France†	Low	21.8	16.3	20.4	*	13.0	12.1	12.7	
	Middle	45.0	51.2	46.7		40.2	44.2	41.6	
	High	32.9	32.3	32.7		45.5	42.0	44.2	
Sweden	Low	8.3	6.0	7.5	***	8.0	9.0	8.3	*
	Middle	46.3	60.6	51.2		33.8	41.5	36.4	
	High	44.5	32.8	40.5		57.4	48.7	54.5	
UK	Low	12.1	15.6	12.7	**	20.4	21.7	20.7	***
	Middle	45.2	51.6	46.2		25.8	49.4	30.6	
	High	37.8	31.1	36.7		52.0	27.4	47.0	

Note: Data are weighted, and missing data are taken into account. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1. †Data for France are from 2007.

Table 8.7 presents proportions of cohabiting and married mothers by educational levels in 2006 and 2014. In 2006, married mothers were more likely to have a high education than cohabiting mothers in all the countries except for Spain (30.2% of married mothers relative to 30.9% of cohabiting mothers) and Germany (28.7% relative to 35.8%). In 2014, the share of holding a high education among married mothers became higher than that of cohabiting mothers in all the six nations. In addition, married mothers were more prone to have a low education than cohabiting mothers in Spain, Germany, France, and Sweden in 2006. However, with the exception of France, cohabiting mothers became more likely to have a low education than married mothers in all the studied nations in 2014. As stated in Chapter 5, female education has significantly increased in Spain in recent decades. Results in Table 8.7 also show that the percentage of mothers with a high education rose from 30.2% in 2006 to 42.1% in 2014 in Spain. It is noteworthy that the degree of the rise in married mothers with a high education (by 12.7 percentage points) was greater than that of cohabiting mothers' (by 4.9 percentage points) between 2006 and 2014.

Table 8.8 shows the distribution of employment status among married and cohabiting fathers aged 20-64 in the six European countries. The percentage of married fathers working in full-time jobs was higher than those of their cohabiting counterparts in Spain (73.7% of married fathers relative to 70.1% of cohabiting fathers), the Czech Republic (70% relative to 65.5%), Germany (75.1% relative to 56.4%), and the UK (65.1% relative to 61.6%) in 2006, and this advantage in the labor market of married fathers over cohabiting fathers remained over time in these countries. Moreover, married father became more likely to have a full-time job than cohabiting fathers in France and Sweden in 2014. Furthermore, men's employment has become increasingly precarious and unstable that the proportion of part-time job increased in almost all studied countries. And cohabiting fathers account more for this increase in Spain, Germany, and Sweden, compared to married fathers. In addition, cohabiting fathers have a higher proportion of unemployment compared with married fathers in all the countries except for Sweden in 2014. Between 2006 and 2014, the unemployment rate substantially increased in Spain relative to other countries, from 4.6% to 18.5% among all fathers, which may be mainly attributed to the Great Recession. It is worth noting that the rise in the unemployment rate was greater among cohabiting fathers (by 20.2 percentage points) than among married fathers (by 12.9 percentage points).

Table 8.8: The distribution of employment status among married and cohabiting fathers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

| | | 2006 | | | | 2014 | | | |
		married	cohabiting	total	Sig.	married	cohabiting	total	Sig.
Spain	full-time	73.7	70.1	73.5	***	61.6	56.7	61.0	***
	part-time	0.9	0.8	0.9		2.5	3.4	2.6	
	self-employed	17.7	19.0	17.8		15.9	10.7	15.3	
	unemployed	4.3	8.5	4.6		17.2	28.7	18.5	
	inactive	3.4	1.7	3.3		2.9	0.6	2.6	
Czech	full-time	70.0	65.5	69.6	***	72.6	67.2	71.5	*
	part-time	0.2	2.1	0.4		0.3	0.0	0.3	
	self-employed	21.9	15.7	21.3		22.1	20.9	21.8	
	unemployed	5.3	14.3	6.2		3.4	8.8	4.4	
	inactive	2.6	2.4	2.6		1.7	3.1	2.0	
Germany	full-time	75.1	56.4	73.5	***	83.1	70.7	81.7	***
	part-time	4.9	6.5	5.0		5.0	8.1	5.3	
	self-employed	10.6	16.1	11.1		6.4	8.1	6.6	
	unemployed	5.8	11.9	6.4		2.3	7.6	2.9	
	inactive	3.7	9.1	4.1		3.2	5.6	3.4	
France†	full-time	75.7	79.7	76.8		74.1	73.6	73.9	*
	part-time	2.4	3.1	2.6		2.2	3.1	2.5	
	self-employed	13.1	9.3	12.1		15.1	12.4	14.2	
	unemployed	4.4	5.8	4.8		5.5	9.0	6.8	
	inactive	4.1	1.7	3.4		3.1	2.0	2.7	
Sweden	full-time	74.0	75.7	74.6		75.0	73.5	74.5	
	part-time	4.1	3.3	3.8		6.3	5.8	6.1	
	self-employed	14.0	14.6	14.2		12.2	14.9	13.1	
	unemployed	2.1	2.4	2.2		3.7	2.7	3.4	
	inactive	5.8	4.0	5.2		2.8	3.2	3.0	
UK	full-time	65.1	61.6	64.5	**	71.6	69.2	71.1	***
	part-time	2.0	2.3	2.1		5.8	4.2	5.5	
	self-employed	13.6	12.0	13.3		15.2	13.9	14.9	
	unemployed	2.0	6.6	2.8		2.4	7.4	3.4	
	inactive	17.3	17.6	17.4		5.1	5.3	5.1	

Note: Data are weighted, and missing data are taken into account. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
†Data for France are from 2007.

Table 8.9: The distribution of employment status among married and cohabiting mothers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

| | | 2006 | | | | 2014 | | | |
		married	cohabiting	total	Sig.	married	cohabiting	total	Sig.
Spain	full-time	33.3	42.2	33.9	***	34.9	40.8	35.6	***
	part-time	13.7	9.9	13.5		15.7	14.0	15.5	
	self-employed	8.0	6.0	7.9		7.0	4.3	6.7	
	unemployed	9.6	19.6	10.2		23.0	27.4	23.5	
	inactive	35.4	22.3	34.5		19.4	13.5	18.8	
Czech	full-time	49.2	39.4	48.3	***	54.0	41.8	51.7	***
	part-time	5.9	2.1	5.5		4.0	2.4	3.7	
	self-employed	7.1	3.6	6.7		10.7	8.3	10.2	
	unemployed	12.6	17.7	13.1		7.4	13.0	8.5	
	inactive	25.2	37.2	26.3		24.0	34.5	26.0	
Germany	full-time	10.2	21.4	11.1	***	13.1	24.0	14.3	***
	part-time	48.2	40.9	47.6		53.2	40.0	51.8	
	self-employed	4.3	4.4	4.4		3.5	2.3	3.4	
	unemployed	5.7	9.0	6.0		2.5	8.4	3.2	
	inactive	31.6	24.2	31.0		27.6	25.2	27.4	
France†	full-time	37.7	43.0	39.2	*	46.0	48.6	46.9	***
	part-time	28.6	26.9	28.2		24.2	23.0	23.7	
	self-employed	4.7	3.2	4.3		6.7	5.0	6.1	
	unemployed	5.9	7.1	6.2		4.6	11.2	6.9	
	inactive	22.6	19.6	21.8		18.6	12.3	16.3	
Sweden	full-time	47.6	49.9	48.4		51.9	54.7	52.8	
	part-time	30.5	28.1	29.7		28.9	30.7	29.5	
	self-employed	4.8	3.7	4.5		4.1	3.0	3.7	
	unemployed	3.5	4.3	3.8		4.6	4.4	4.5	
	inactive	13.6	14.0	13.7		10.6	7.3	9.5	
UK	full-time	25.2	27.0	25.5	***	35.5	34.7	35.4	**
	part-time	35.4	30.5	34.6		31.0	29.1	30.6	
	self-employed	6.7	5.5	6.5		7.5	5.4	7.0	
	unemployed	0.4	2.2	0.7		1.5	4.4	2.1	
	inactive	32.4	34.8	32.8		24.5	26.4	24.9	

Note: Data are weighted, and missing data are taken into account. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***$p <0.01$, **$p<0.05$, *$p<0.1$. †Data for France are from 2007.

Contrary to fathers, results in Table 8.9 suggest that cohabiting mothers were more likely to have a full-time job than married mothers in most of the studied countries except for the Czech Republic in both years and the UK in 2014. Moreover, the proportion of mothers who were inactive in the

labor market was higher among married mothers than among cohabiting mothers in Spain (19.4% relative to 13.5%), Germany (27.6% relative to 25.2%), France (18.6% relative to 12.3%) Sweden (10.6% relative to 7.3%) in 2014. Nevertheless, the proportion of unemployed was also higher among cohabiting mothers than among their married counterparts.

Between 2006 and 2014, Spanish mothers became more involved in the labor market as mothers in Germany and the UK, but most of them were unemployed (from 10.2% to 23.5%) rather than being employed. Moreover, the rise in the labor market participation among Spanish mothers (both married and cohabiting) was greater than those from other European countries. The substantial rise in mothers' labor force participation may be explained by the expansion of higher education and the increase in labor market flexibility (Peña-Boquete, 2014). Another possible explanation is related to the current economic crisis, as the dramatic rise in unemployment may force women to go out from household to the labor market in order to alleviate financial pressure of households. In addition, part-time jobs are more widespread among mothers in Germany and the UK, while the share is lower among mothers in Spain and the Czech Republic. Furthermore, married mothers tend to have a part-time job compared with cohabiting mothers in all the nations with the exception of Spanish mothers in 2014. In Spain, not only the proportion of employment among mothers was lower (55.3% in 2006 and 57.8% in 2014) than in other five European nations, but the gap between that for mothers and all partnered women was also lower than in other countries (not shown in the table). This result implies that motherhood may not be the major problem for mothers' employment in Spain; instead, the lack of labour demand is.

Table 8.10: The distribution of contract type among married and cohabiting fathers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

		2006				2014			
		married	cohabiting	total	Sig.	married	cohabit	total	Sig.
Spain	Permanent	64.6	55.2	64.0	***	60.0	51.1	58.9	***
	Temporary	16.7	24.7	17.2		21.2	32.2	22.5	
	Others	18.7	20.1	18.8		18.8	16.7	18.6	
Czech	Permanent	67.8	66.9	67.7	*	69.7	67.8	69.4	
	Temporary	9.2	12.6	9.5		7.0	10.2	7.7	
	Others	23.0	20.6	22.8		23.2	21.9	23.0	
Germany	Permanent	73.8	52.5	72.0	***	86.5	71.6	84.9	***
	Temporary	5.8	10.5	6.2		6.0	19.0	7.4	
	Others	20.4	37.1	21.8		7.5	9.5	7.7	
France†	Permanent	66.8	65.9	66.5	**	70.8	67.6	69.6	***
	Temporary	7.6	11.5	8.6		7.0	12.0	8.8	
	Others	25.7	22.6	24.9		22.3	20.4	21.6	
Sweden††	Permanent	35.1	35.1	35.1		37.6	34.8	36.7	
	Temporary	2.6	3.5	2.9		3.2	5.0	3.8	
	Others	62.3	61.4	62.0		59.2	60.2	59.6	
UK	Permanent	64.6	60.0	63.9		72.6	68.3	71.7	*
	Temporary	1.3	1.9	1.4		1.1	2.1	1.3	
	Others	34.1	38.1	34.7		26.4	29.6	27.0	

Note: Data are weighted, and missing data are taken into account. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
†Data for France are from 2007. ††The proportion of missing data in Sweden is high because their data collection is based on register.

Results in Table 8.10 indicate that permanent contracts are the primary type of employment relationship for men in Europe, while the proportion of fixed-term contracts varies significantly across countries, from as high as 17.2% in 2006 and 22.5%. in 2014 in Spain to as low as 1.4% in 2006 and 1.3% in 2014 in the UK among fathers. Fixed-term contracts are quite widespread in Spain, which is related to higher risks of job precariousness such as lower earnings and protections, and very limited transitions to standard forms of employment. Married fathers were more likely to have a permanent job than cohabiting fathers in all the nations in 2006 and 2014. Contrarily, cohabiting fathers tend to be predominant in occupations under fix-term contracts compared with married ones. More importantly, the share of fathers with a temporary job in Spain (i.e. around a fifth of cohabiting fathers with a fix-termed job in 2006 and 2014) is significantly larger than those of their counterparts in other countries.

Table 8.11: The distribution of contract type among married and cohabiting mothers aged 20-64 in 2006 and 2014, by country (%)

| | | 2006 | | | | 2014 | | | |
		married	cohabiting	total	Sig.	married	cohabit	total	Sig.
Spain	Permanent	43.3	46.0	43.5	*	50.9	45.1	50.2	*
	Temporary	31.7	40.0	32.3		30.5	38.0	31.4	
	Others	25.0	13.9	24.3		18.6	16.9	18.4	
Czech	Permanent	71.5	64.3	70.9	*	70.8	62.0	69.1	*
	Temporary	16.2	16.3	16.2		14.8	21.4	16.0	
	Others	12.2	19.4	12.9		14.4	16.7	14.9	
Germany	Permanent	49.9	52.3	50.2	*	81.1	68.9	79.8	***
	Temporary	6.5	10.0	6.8		12.0	23.8	13.3	
	Others	43.5	37.7	43.0		6.9	7.3	6.9	
France†	Permanent	58.0	59.4	58.3	**	65.8	63.5	65.0	**
	Temporary	12.6	17.3	13.8		10.2	15.0	12.0	
	Others	29.5	23.4	27.8		24.0	21.5	23.1	
Sweden††	Permanent	30.7	36.0	32.5	**	34.1	36.8	35.0	
	Temporary	6.3	7.3	6.6		5.6	7.8	6.3	
	Others	63.0	56.7	60.9		60.3	55.5	58.7	
UK	Permanent	57.6	55.6	57.3		60.4	61.6	60.7	
	Temporary	2.6	1.9	2.5		2.2	0.5	1.8	
	Others	39.8	42.4	40.2		37.4	37.9	37.5	

Note: Data are weighted, and missing data are taken into account. Both parents aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests were used, ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
†Data for France are from 2007. ††The proportion of missing data in Sweden is high because their data collection is based on register.

Results in Table 8.11 show that the proportion of working under permanent contracts among married mothers was higher than that of cohabiting mothers in the Czech Republic (71.5% relative to 64.3%) and the UK (57.6% relative to 55.6%) in 2006. Married mothers became more advantaged in the type of job contract than cohabiting mothers in Spain (50.9% relative to 45.1%), the Czech Republic (70.8% relative to 62%), Germany (81.1% relative to 68.9%), and France (65.8% relative to 63.5%) in 2014. Unlike fathers, the percentage of permanent contract was enhanced among married mothers in Spain, from 43.3% to 50.9%. However, the proportion of permanent contracts declined for cohabiting mothers, from 46% to 45.1%. Moreover, disparities in the share of working rates in permanent jobs between married and cohabiting mothers increased over time in most of the countries, and the growth in Spain and Germany were relatively high.

Chapter 9 Multivariate results

9.1 The monetary-based child poverty before and after tax and transfers

Results in Chapter 8 show that children living in households headed by married parents have higher risks of monetary and non-monetary poverty than children living in cohabiting-parent households in most of the studied countries. In order to explore whether and to what extent can the differences in child poverty risks by parental union statuses be attributable to disparities in parents' union status or in socioeconomic characteristics, multivariate analyses are applied in the following part. First of all, the relationship between parents' union status and risks of the monetary poverty of children was investigated in each country in 2006 and 2014, respectively. Binary logistic regression was used to examine whether children living in households headed by cohabiting parents differ from those living in married-parent households in terms of the poverty risks after and before taxes and transfers. In addition, ordinal logistic regression was employed to examine the relationship between parental union status and children's material living conditions. The socioeconomic characteristics of fathers and mothers were included in the models to see whether the link between the risks of child poverty and parents' living arrangements can be explained by their socioeconomic status. In addition to education and whether parents are working or not, other indicators regarding the employment situation are also included in the models. Then, the interaction effect of parental union status and year of observation was tested to see the changes in the relationship between child poverty risks and living arrangements before and during the economic crisis. Finally, standardization and decomposition technique was applied to assess cross-national differences in the risk of child poverty originated in market income or government redistribution or the disparities in the prevalence of children in cohabitation in different countries. By decomposing these components, the contribution of possible interactions of parental union status with the labor market and with the tax and transfer schemes can also be estimated.

Table 9.1: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in Spain in 2006

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.2	-0.2	-0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2
Father's age >39		0.1	-0.02		0.1	-0.1
Father's migrant		0.2	0.2		-0.02	-0.3
Mother's age >39		0.1	0.02		0.2	0.1
Mother's migrant		0.5*	0.8**		0.5**	0.9**
Number of children		0.5***	0.5***		0.4***	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.5**			-0.4**
tertiary			-1.1***			-1.3***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.2			0.5
self-employment			0.9*			0.9
unemployed			1.5***			1.9***
inactive			1.0***			2.0***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.7***			1.0***
others			0.8			0.8
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.2			-0.3
tertiary			-0.6***			-0.5**
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.8***			0.8***
self-employment			1.0			1.0***
unemployed			1.5***			1.4***
inactive			1.8***			1.7***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.7***			0.7***
others			1.0***			0.8***
Intercept	-1.4***	-2.3***	-4.4***	-1.6***	-2.5***	-4.5***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.1 presents the results of binary logistic regression of monetary child poverty after and before taxes and transfers in Spain in 2006. In Model 1, the association between parents' union status and the risk of child poverty is tested. Cohabiting-parent households have slightly lower risks of child poverty after taxes and transfers and higher risks of pre-tax and transfers child poverty than married-parent households, although the relationship was not statistically significant in 2006. In model 2, I additionally include father's and mother's demographic characteristics and household composition. Migrant background of mothers and the number of children in households are positively related to risks of child monetary risks. Hence, mother's migrant background and more children at home increase the risk of monetary child poverty. Model 3 adds father's and mother's socioeconomic characteristics, including education and employment situation. Paternal education has a significantly negative association with the risk of child poverty. The higher levels of fathers' and mothers' education, the lower risks of the child poverty. Compared with those fathers working in full-time jobs, all other employment statuses except for part-time employment significantly increased the risk of child poverty. Children living with unemployed fathers have the highest likelihood of being poor. In fact, the coefficients of fathers' education slightly decreased after the inclusion of father's employment status but remained statistically significant (not shown in the table). Moreover, fathers holding a fixed-term job contract relative to permanent ones significantly raised their children's poverty risks. Similar to the results for fathers, children living with mothers who have a tertiary education, working in a full-time job and holding a permanent job contract have the lowest risks of monetary poverty. Furthermore, compared with the child poverty after taxes and transfers, the effects of father's education and employment situation were in general stronger for the child poverty before taxes and transfers in Spain.

Table 9.2: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in Spain in 2014

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.3**	0.3*	0.2	0.1	0.1	-0.2
Father's age >39		-0.1	-0.2		0.1	0.04
Father's migrant		1.0***	0.9***		0.8***	0.7***
Mother's age >39		0.2	0.4*		0.1	0.3
Mother's migrant		0.7***	0.4		0.9***	0.6**
Number of children		0.4***	0.4***		0.3***	0.4***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.7***			-0.7***
tertiary			-1.1***			-1.3***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.1***			1.5***
self-employment			0.5			0.7*
unemployed			1.9***			2.9***
inactive			-0.2			3.2***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.4***			1.9***
others			1.3			0.8**
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.4**			-0.4**
tertiary			-0.8***			-0.6***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.2***			1.3***
self-employment			0.7*			1.2***
unemployed			1.7***			2.0***
inactive			1.4***			1.6***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.1***			1.3***
others			1.4***			1.1***
Intercept	-1.1***	-2.1***	-4.3***	-0.9***	-1.8***	-4.7***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Results in Table 9.2 show that parents' living arrangements are significantly associated with the risks of child poverty post-tax and transfers in Spain in 2014, but not with child poverty risks before taxes and transfers. More exactly, children living in households headed by cohabiting parents have a higher likelihood of being poor than their counterparts in married-parent households. After the inclusion of parents' demographic traits and household composition in Model 2, the link between parental union status and child poverty risks after taxes and transfers remained statistically significant. Moreover, father's migrant background became significantly related to higher child poverty risks in 2014. Furthermore, results in Model 3 show that after adjusting for fathers' and mothers' education and the labor market situation, the association between parents' union status and child post-tax and transfers poverty became statistically insignificant. Children living with unemployed fathers or those working in part-time jobs have a higher likelihood of being poor than children living with fathers who are full-time employed. In addition, mother's education and employment situation are significantly related to the children' economic well-being as well. Likewise, children living with mothers having a higher educational level, working in a full-time job and holding a permanent contract are better off economically.

Table 9.3 displays results of binary logistic regression of the child poverty pre- and post-tax and transfers in the Czech Republic in 2006. Results suggest that children living with cohabiting parents are more likely to be poor than their counterparts with married parents in both years, and these relationships remained statistically significant after taking parents' demographic traits and household composition into consideration (as shown in Model 2). In 2006, after adjustment for paternal and maternal socioeconomic characteristics, the significant association between living arrangements and child poverty risks after taxes and transfers disappeared in Model 3. On the contrary, in the case of the pre-tax and transfers child poverty, its link with father's education remained significant after controlling for their education and employment situation. Moreover, father's education is found to be negatively related to child monetary poverty risks, but only for those with tertiary education. Unemployed fathers have the highest risks of child poverty both before and after taxes and transfers. In addition, children with a father working with a temporary contract have significantly higher post-tax-and-transfer poverty risks than children whose father working with a permanent job contract. In addition, mothers holding an upper secondary or tertiary education (compared to mothers with low education), and being full-time employed were significantly related to lower child poverty risks.

Table 9.3: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in the Czech Republic in 2006

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.9***	0.9***	0.5	0.9***	0.9***	0.5*
Father's age >39		0.1	0.5		-0.1	0.4
Father's migrant		0.7	-0.1		0.9*	0.1
Mother's age >39		0.3	-0.1		0.3	0.05
Mother's migrant		0.5	0.5		0.3	0.4
Number of children		0.7***	0.4**		0.7***	0.6***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			0.05			-0.8
tertiary			-1.3*			-1.7**
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.02			1.8***
self-employment			0.3			1.0
unemployed			2.8***			3.4***
inactive			2.1***			2.9***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.8*			0.4
others			-0.1			-0.9
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-1.2***			-0.7**
tertiary			-1.9***			-1.5***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.7			1.1**
self-employment			0.5			0.5
unemployed			2.3***			2.5***
inactive			1.3***			2.5***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.4			0.4
others			0.1			0.2
Intercept	-1.6***	-3.6***	-3.7***	-1.8***	-3.1***	-3.4***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.4: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in the Czech Republic in 2014

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.7***	0.7***	-0.2	0.9***	0.9***	0.3
Father's age >39		-0.6*	-0.5		-0.6**	-0.6*
Father's migrant		0.9**	0.3		0.3	-0.8
Mother's age >39		0.7**	0.7*		0.5*	0.8**
Mother's migrant		0.3	0.4		0.6	0.8
Number of children		0.7***	0.5***		0.7***	0.6***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.7			-0.8*
tertiary			-2.3***			-2.3***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			3.6***			3.1***
self-employment			0.1			1.2
unemployed			2.2***			2.7***
inactive			2.0***			3.8***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.0**			1.1***
others			1.1			0.2
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.04			-0.3
tertiary			-1.2			-0.9*
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.3			1.0
self-employment			0.4			0.7
unemployed			2.0***			1.6***
inactive			0.8**			1.8***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.4***			1.1***
others			0.6			0.2
Intercept	-2.6***	-3.9***	-4.1***	-2.0***	-3.3***	-3.6***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

In comparison to marriage, parents' cohabitation was significantly associated with higher risks of child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in the Czech Republic in 2014 (Table 9.4). After adjustment for demographic characteristics of both parents and household composition in Model 2, this relationship remained statistically significant. However, unlike the results in 2006, the correlations between children's living arrangements and both pre- and post-tax and transfer child poverty became insignificant after including parents' education and employment situation in 2014. In addition, as shown in Model 3, father's part-time employment became significantly related to risks of child poverty pre- and post-tax and transfers in 2014. It is noteworthy that children living with fathers work in part-time job were even more likely to be poor compared to those with unemployed fathers. Moreover, the relationship between mother's job contact types and child poverty risks became statistically significant in 2014. Children living with mothers having a fixed-term contract were more likely to experience poverty than those with mothers working with a permanent contract.

As shown in Table 9.5, parents' living arrangements were significantly related to risks of child poverty pre- and post-tax and transfers in Germany in 2006. Parents' cohabitation relative to marriage increased children's poverty risks, and this association remained significant after taking parents' demographic traits and the number of children at houdhold into account in Model 2. However, the positive association between parental cohabitation and children's likelihood of experiencing poverty pre- and post-tax and transfers disappeared after adjustments for parents' education and employment situation in 2006. The irregular employment of both fathers and mothers such as part-time employment and working with temporary job contracts significantly increased child poverty risks. Moreover, parents' socioeconomic characterics seem to play a more important role in the relationship with pre-tax-and-transfer child poverty than with post-tax-and-transfer child poverty. For instance, children of fathers with a tertiary education compared to those of fathers having a low level of education had a significantly lower risk of pre-tax-and-transfer poverty, but not for child poverty post-tax and transfers.

Table 9.5: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in Germany in 2006

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.8***	0.9***	0.3	0.8***	0.9***	0.4
Father's age >39		-0.02	-0.06		-0.04	-0.1
Father's migrant		0.7***	0.3		0.8***	0.3
Mother's age >39		-0.1	-0.2		0.05	0.03
Mother's migrant		0.3	0.1		0.3	0.1
Number of children		0.2***	0.2**		0.4***	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.1			-0.2
tertiary			-0.6			-1.1***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.1**			2.2***
self-employment			-1.1			-0.7
unemployed			0.2			1.4
inactive			0.1			1.3
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.2***			1.9***
others			2.1			2.2**
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.3			-0.2
tertiary			-0.2			-0.6*
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.8*			0.7**
self-employment			0.1			0.9
unemployed			1.6*			2.9***
inactive			0.5			1.2*
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.6*			1.3***
others			0.8			0.6
Intercept	-2.0***	-2.4***	-3.5***	-1.6***	-2.4***	-4.1***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.6: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in Germany in 2014

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	1.1***	1.0***	0.7***	1.1***	1.1***	0.8***
Father's age >39		-0.3	-0.2		-0.3	-0.2
Father's migrant		0.8***	0.4		0.9***	0.3
Mother's age >39		-0.3	-0.1		-0.5**	-0.2
Mother's migrant		0.04	0.2		0.04	0.4
Number of children		0.1	0.04		0.4***	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.3			-0.7**
tertiary			-0.9**			-1.8***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.5			1.3***
self-employment			1.0			-0.1
unemployed			1.3***			2.9***
inactive			0.8*			2.2***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.0***			1.9***
others			0.3			1.6***
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.8***			-0.9***
tertiary			-1.6***			-1.5***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.4			0.6
self-employment			0.7			-0.1
unemployed			1.4***			2.4***
inactive			1.0***			1.5***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.7***			1.0***
others			0.6			0.8**
Intercept	-2.2***	-2.2***	-1.9***	-2.0***	-2.6***	-2.9***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

In 2014, parents' union status was significantly associated with child poverty risks pre- and post-tax and transfers in Germany (see Table 9.6). Unlike results in 2006, relationships between cohabitation and children's poverty risks before and after including taxes and social transfers remained significantly positive after controlling for parents' socioeconomic and demographic characteristics (in Model 3). It means that this relationship cannot be explained by the differences in socioeconomic and demographic characteristics between cohabiting and married parents. Hence, children living in households headed by cohabiting parents significantly differ from those in married-parent households in terms of their economic well-being in Germany in 2014. As fathers' education and employment situation are concerned, fathers being unemployed or inactive in the labor market, working with a temporary job contract, or without a tertiary education increased poverty risks of their children. Moreover, fathers who have an upper-secondary education or a part-time job significantly elevated the risk of child pre-tax-and-transfer poverty but not the risk of child post-tax-and transfer poverty. In addition, mother's education has a significantly negative link with child poverty risks, and their tertiary education was related to the lowest likelihood of child poverty compared to their counterparts with other educational levels. Mother's unemployment, inactivity, and temporary job contracts elevated child poverty risks as well.

Table 9.7 presents the monetary-based child poverty risks pre- and post-tax and transfers in France in 2007. Results in Model 1 present that children living in cohabiting-parent families did not significantly differ from children in married-parent households in terms of the economic hardship in France in 2007. After the inclusion of parents' age, migrant background, and household composition in Model 2, children in cohabiting-parent households have significantly higher risks of monetary poverty than children in married-parent households. Moreover, the positive relationship between parents' cohabitation and child poverty pre-tax and transfers remained statistically significant after taking parents' soecionomic characteristics into consideration in Model 3. In addition, father's and mother's tertiary education, full-time employment, and permanent job contract reduced the likelihood of suffering from economic difficulties of children.

Table 9.7: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in France in 2007

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.03	0.4*	0.2	0.1	0.5***	0.4*
Father's age >39		0.1	0.03		-0.1	-0.2
Father's migrant		0.8***	0.3		0.9***	0.3
Mother's age >39		0.04	0.1		-0.1	-0.1
Mother's migrant		0.8***	0.4*		1.0***	0.6**
Number of children		0.4***	0.2***		0.8***	0.7***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			0.02			-0.1
tertiary			-0.5*			-1.1***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.5			0.7*
self-employment			0.7*			1.1***
unemployed			1.5***			2.2***
inactive			0.7***			1.8***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.9***			1.4***
others			0.5*			0.2
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower						
secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.4*			-0.4*
tertiary			-1.4***			-1.8***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.8***			0.6**
self-employment			0.7			0.01
unemployed			1.1***			0.9**
inactive			1.8***			1.9***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.6***			1.1***
others			0.7***			0.9***
Intercept	-1.9***	-3.2***	-4.1***	-1.5***	-3.5***	-4.5***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.8: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in France in 2014

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.1	0.5***	0.2	0.04	0.4***	-0.03
Father's age >39		-0.1	0.04		-0.3	-0.2
Father's migrant		0.9***	0.6**		1.1***	0.8**
Mother's age >39		0.04	-0.1		0.1	0.2
Mother's migrant		1.0***	0.4		0.9***	0.4
Number of children		0.3***	0.1		0.6***	0.7***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.5**			-0.5**
tertiary			-1.2***			-1.5***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.2**			1.4***
self-employment			1.2**			0.8*
unemployed			1.5***			3.0***
inactive			1.2**			3.3***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.6*			0.9***
others			0.5			0.1
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.9***			-0.6**
tertiary			-1.5***			-1.4***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.4			0.8***
self-employment			2.0***			1.8***
unemployed			2.0***			2.4***
inactive			2.4***			2.7***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.5*			0.7**
others			-0.3			0.2
Intercept	-2.0***	-3.0***	-2.9***	-1.6***	-3.1***	-4.0***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Similar to the results in 2007, children living in households headed by cohabiting parents have higher poverty risks than their counterparts living with married parents after adjustment for both parents' demographic characteristics and the number of children in household in 2014 (see Table 9.8). However, this relationship became insignificant after the inclusion of fathers' and mothers' education and employment in Model 3. In addition, both parents' education and employment situation have a significant relationship with the risk of child monetary poverty. Moreover, the positive effect of fathers' tertiary education on children's economic well-being has become stronger over time, and it is more important to pre-tax and transfers child poverty than to child poverty risk after taxes and transfers. It is noteworthy that fathers working in a part-time job did not significantly elevate the risks of post-tax and transfers child poverty in 2007. However, in 2014, children living with fathers who were part-time employed have a higher likelihood of being poor, and this effect was stronger for the pre-tax and transfers child poverty than to the post-tax poverty risks.

In Sweden, parents' living arrangements were not significantly related to their children's risks of being monetary poor in 2006 (see Table 9.9) and 2014 (see Table 9.10). After controlling for fathers' and mothers' demographic and socioeconomic traits, the relationship between parental living arrangements and child monetary poverty before taxes and transfers became significant in both years. Children in cohabiting-parent households have a higher likelihood of experiencing pre-tax and transfer poverty than children in households of married parents. Additionally, fathers' and mothers' education and employment status were more important to the risks of child poverty based on market incomes than that based on household incomes including taxes and transfers. Moreover, the job contract type of fathers were significantly associated with child poverty risks, especially for pre-tax and transfers poverty. Child poverty risks were lower for fathers with a permanent job than their counterparts with a temporary job. Furthermore, fathers' and mothers' economic resources and security have become increasingly important to the economic well-being of their children over time. In comparison to fathers and mothers who work in full-time jobs, those who have a part-time job, self-employed, unemployed, or not active in the labor market have a higher likelihood of suffering monetary poverty.

Table 9.9: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in Sweden in 2006

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.1	0.2	0.3	0.01	0.3	0.3*
Father's age >39		-0.1	-0.3		-0.2	-0.3
Father's migrant		1.5***	1.0***		1.5***	1.1***
Mother's age >39		-0.1	-0.1		-0.4*	-0.5*
Mother's migrant		0.9***	0.7**		0.8***	0.8***
Number of children		0.6***	0.6***		0.4	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower						
secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.1			-0.6**
tertiary			0.5			-0.5
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.6***			1.7***
self-employment			1.6***			1.4***
unemployed			1.7***			2.3***
inactive			0.9**			3.4***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.2**			1.8***
others			0.7**			0.1
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower						
secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.5			0.1
tertiary			-0.2			-0.01
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.9**			0.7***
self-employment			1.6***			0.5
unemployed			1.9***			1.7***
inactive			1.7***			1.6***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.1*			1.2***
others			1.2***			0.8***
Intercept	-2.4***	-4.3***	-7.0***	-1.9***	-3.1***	-5.0***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.10: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in Sweden in 2014

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.1	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.5***	0.7***
Father's age >39		-0.1	-0.7**		-0.2	-0.7***
Father's migrant		1.8***	1.2***		1.7***	1.2***
Mother's age >39		-0.7***	-0.2		-0.8***	-0.4
Mother's migrant		1.0***	0.7**		0.8***	0.3
Number of children		0.2**	0.2*		0.4***	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.7**			-1.6***
tertiary			-0.5			-1.4***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.8***			2.3***
self-employment			1.5***			1.8***
unemployed			1.9***			3.2***
inactive			3.1***			4.2***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.3**			1.3***
others			0.5			-0.5
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			0.01			0.3
tertiary			-0.2			-0.2
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.9**			1.1***
self-employment			2.2***			2.3***
unemployed			1.8***			3.9***
inactive			2.3***			3.0***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.5			0.7
others			0.01			-0.4
Intercept	-2.2***	-3.3***	-4.7***	-1.9***	-3.0***	-3.6***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Results in Table 9.11 show that parents' union status was significantly correlated to child poverty risks in the UK in 2006. This relationship remained statistically significant in terms of both pre- and post-tax and transfers child poverty after including parents' education and employment situation as well as demographic traits in 2006. It indicates that cohabiting-parent households have higher risks of pre-tax and transfers poverty risks than married-parent households, and the disparities cannot be explained by the differences in fathers' and mothers' economic resources in the UK. Moreover, children living with fathers and mothers who have a tertiary education were least likely to be poor, and fathers with an upper secondary education did not lower the risks of child poverty compared to those with a lower level of education. In addition, father's part-time job, unemployment, inactivity in the labor force compared to full-time employment elevated children's risk of monetary poverty. Nevertheless, fathers' and mothers' job contract types only significantly related to the risk of child poverty post-tax and transfers.

As shown in Table 9.12, significant relationships between parental union statuses and child monetary poverty risks disappeared after controlling for education levels and employment situation of both parents in the UK in 2014. Hence, parents' socioeconomic characteristics may account for the diversity in child poverty risks between married- and cohabiting-parent households. In addition, children living with fathers with a tertiary education have significantly lower risks of poverty than those with fathers having a low educational level. Part-time employment and unemployment of fathers were more strongly associated with child poverty pre-tax and transfers than with child poverty post-tax and transfers. Moreover, mothers' education only has a significantly negative association with child poverty pre-tax and transfers, and their employment status plays an important role in child poverty risks both pre- and post-tax and transfers.

Table 9.11: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in the UK in 2006

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.6***	0.9***	0.6**	0.7***	0.9***	0.8***
Father's age >39		-0.3	-0.3		-0.3	-0.4
Father's migrant		0.7***	0.2		1.0***	0.7***
Mother's age >39		0.002	0.02		-0.1	-0.1
Mother's migrant		0.5**	0.5*		0.3	0.2
Number of children		0.4***	0.3***		0.6***	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.1			-0.2
tertiary			-0.6**			-1.1***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			2.7***			3.2***
self-employment			-0.5			-0.3
unemployed			1.2**			2.6***
inactive			1.0**			2.1***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			-1.1*			-0.7
others			2.2***			2.0***
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.3			-0.6**
tertiary			-0.8***			-1.1***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.9***			1.2***
self-employment			0.6			0.6
unemployed			1.1			0.7
inactive			1.5***			1.6***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.0**			0.9
others			1.0***			1.3***
Intercept	-1.8***	-2.7***	-4.3***	-1.7***	-2.8***	-4.5***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.12: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary child poverty pre- and post- tax and transfers in the UK in 2014

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.2	0.5***	-0.1	0.4***	0.7***	0.1
Father's age >39		-0.1	0.04		-0.2	-0.1
Father's migrant		0.7***	0.4		0.8***	0.5*
Mother's age >39		0.2	0.1		0.1	-0.2
Mother's migrant		0.3	0.2		0.2	-0.2
Number of children		0.3***	0.1		0.6***	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			0.02			-0.1
tertiary			-0.5*			-0.9***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.5***			2.5***
self-employment			-0.3			-0.3
unemployed			1.6***			3.2***
inactive			0.2			1.9***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.3			0.3
others			1.7***			1.8***
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02			-0.5**
tertiary			-0.3			-1.0***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.8***			1.2***
self-employment			3.0***			2.4***
unemployed			4.0***			3.6***
inactive			3.7***			3.7***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			-1.3			-1.4
others			-1.7**			-0.9
Intercept	-1.8***	-2.7***	-3.8***	-1.4***	-2.7***	-3.9***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

9.2   The child poverty risk in terms of material deprivation

It is by now widely recognized that monetary metrics are not enough to capture the economic well-being of children in different types of households. Hence, there has been increasing awareness of the need to focus on the multidimensional child poverty. In this section, I investigated the relationship between cohabitation and children's economic well-being in terms of the non-monetary aspect, that is, the material deprivation. Unequal weighting was applied to measure material deprivation, that is, giving different weights to different deprivation items according to its importance and prevalence in a certain country. For instance, households' ability to afford a holiday is given distinct weights from the affordability of a meal with meat or fish.

Table 9.13 displays the results of ordinary least-squares regression of children's risks of material deprivation in Spain in 2006 and 2014. Children living in cohabiting-parent households were more likely to experience more material hardship than children in households headed by married parents in both years. More importantly, the association between the risk of being materially deprived and parents' union status remained statistically significant after adjusting for both parents' demographic traits and household composition in Model 2, and after including fathers' and mothers' education and employment situation in Model 3. In other words, the disparities in the risks of material deprivation between children in married- and cohabiting-parent households cannot be totally explained by the differences in socioeconomic characteristics of fathers and mothers in different living arrangements. In addition, fathers' education was negatively related to their children's risks of material deprivation. Nevertheless, children living with a father who has a middle level of education enjoy a significantly better material conditions than children of fathers with a low education in 2006, but this relationship became insignificant in 2014. As father's employment situation is concerned, children living with unemployed fathers had the highest risks of being materially deprived in 2006 and 2014. It is noteworthy that fathers' part-time employment relative to full-time employment reduced their children's material living conditions in 2014 but not in 2006. Moreover, higher risks of being materially deprived were found among children whose father work with a fixed-term contract compared to those with a permanent employment contract. Children living with mothers having a lower education, being unemployed or inactive in the labor market, working with a temporary job contract were significantly more likely to experience material deprivation.

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Table 9.13: Ordinary least squares regression predicting the risk of material deprivation in Spain in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.04***	0.03***	0.03***	0.03***	0.02***	0.01*
Father's age >39		0.01	0.01		-0.01	-0.01
Father's migrant		0.04***	0.03***		0.1***	0.04***
Mother's age >39		-0.01	-0.01		0.03	0.002
Mother's migrant		0.03***	0.03***		0.04***	0.02**
Number of children		0.01	0.01		0.01***	0.01**
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02***			-0.003
tertiary			-0.02***			-0.02***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.02			0.02*
self-employment			-0.01			-0.01
unemployed			0.03**			0.05***
inactive			0.03**			0.01
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.03***			0.02***
others			-0.002			0.02*
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02***			-0.02***
tertiary			-0.03***			-0.03***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.002			0.01
self-employment			-0.01			-0.01
unemployed			0.01**			0.03***
inactive			0.01*			0.01**
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.01*			0.01**
others			0.01**			0.02***
Intercept	0.04***	0.02	0.03*	0.06***	0.03***	0.04***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.14: Ordinary least squares regression predicting the risk of material deprivation in the Czech Republic in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.05***	0.05***	0.02**	0.03***	0.03***	0.01
Father's age >39		-0.01	0.001		-0.01*	-0.004
Father's migrant		0.05**	0.02		0.06***	0.05***
Mother's age >39		0.01	0.004		0.02*	0.01**
Mother's migrant		0.001	-0.02		-0.01	-0.01
Number of children		0.02***	0.01***		0.02***	0.01**
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.1***			-0.1***
tertiary			-0.1***			-0.1***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.1*			0.02
self-employment			-0.003			-0.1**
unemployed			0.1***			0.04**
inactive			0.002			0.07**
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.03***			0.05***
others			-0.02			0.1**
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.1***			-0.03**
tertiary			-0.1***			-0.1***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.01			0.02*
self-employment			-0.01			-0.02
unemployed			0.1***			0.03***
inactive			0.02***			0.02***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.02***			0.01*
others			0.01			0.001
Intercept	0.1***	0.03**	0.2***	0.05***	0.01	0.1***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

In the Czech Republic, parental living arrangements were significantly related to children's risks of suffering from material deprivation (see Table 9.14). Child living in cohabiting-parent households had a higher likelihood of being materially deprived than children in households headed by married parents in 2006 and 2014. After adjusting for parents' education and employment status in Model 3, the significant association remained in 2006, but it disappeared in 2014. Hence, differences in the risks of non-monetary child poverty between cohabiting- and married-parent households might be explained by the disparity in economic resources of parents in different union statuses in the Czech Republic in 2014. Moreover, fathers' and mothers' educational levels were negatively associated with their children's material living conditions. Higher educational levels of fathers and mothers reduced their children's risks of experiencing material deprivation. In addition, children living with parents who are unemployed or have a temporary job contract had a lower level of material conditions than children with parents who have a full-time job or work with a permanent job contract.

Results in Table 9.15 suggest that children living in cohabiting-parent households were more likely to experience material deprivation than their counterparts in households headed by married parents in Germany in 2006 and 2014. Moreover, disparities in the likelihood of being materially deprived between cohabiting- and married-parent households increased over time. The positive association between cohabitation and the risk of children's material deprivation can be explained by paternal socioeconomic status in 2006 but not in 2014. Fathers and mothers with an upper secondary or a tertiary education lower the risks of their children suffering from poor material living standards compared to their counterparts with a low educational level. As the employment status and stability of parents are concerned, unemployment raised the risks of material deprivation, and the significant effect of self-employment was also found among fathers in 2006 but not for mothers. In addition, contract types of mother's job became more important in 2014 than in 2006. For fathers and mothers working with a fixed-term contract, the material resources available to their children were relatively lower than those working with a permanent job contract.

Table 9.15: Ordinary least squares regression predicting the risk of material deprivation in Germany in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.02***	0.02***	0.01	0.03***	0.02***	0.01**
Father's age >39		0.002	-0.001		-0.002	-0.001
Father's migrant		0.02*	-0.004		0.02**	0.002
Mother's age >39		-0.01	-0.004		-0.01**	-0.004
Mother's migrant		0.02**	0.02*		0.002	0.004
Number of children		0.1***	0.1***		0.005**	0.004**
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.03***			-0.03***
tertiary			-0.04***			-0.05***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.01			-0.001
self-employment			0.04***			0.01
unemployed			0.1***			0.1***
inactive			0.05***			0.04**
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.02**			0.02*
others			-0.03***			-0.004
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.04***			-0.03***
tertiary			-0.05***			-0.04***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.004			0.002
self-employment			0.002			-0.002
unemployed			0.1***			0.04***
inactive			-0.004			0.01*
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.001			0.01*
others			0.01			0.02
Intercept	0.1***	0.04***	0.1***	0.03***	0.03***	0.1***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1, †p<1.0.

Table 9.16: Ordinary least squares regression predicting the risk of material deprivation in France in 2007 and 2014

	2007			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.02***	0.02***	0.02***	0.01*	0.01*	0.004
Father's age >39		0.002	-0.001		-0.01*	-0.01*
Father's migrant		0.02***	0.004		0.03***	0.01**
Mother's age >39		-0.01*	-0.01*		0.003	0.002
Mother's migrant		0.03***	0.02***		0.02***	0.01
Number of children		0.004**	0.0002		0.01***	0.005**
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02			-0.01
tertiary			-0.03***			-0.02***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.02			0.02**
self-employment			0.001			0.01
unemployed			0.1***			0.1***
inactive			0.03***			0.04**
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.03***			0.02***
others			-0.001			-0.004
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02***			-0.02**
tertiary			-0.03***			-0.03***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.01***			0.01**
self-employment			-0.001			0.001
unemployed			0.02**			0.03***
inactive			0.02***			0.02**
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.01***			0.02***
others			0.01**			0.01
Intercept	0.04***	0.02***	0.05***	0.04***	0.02***	0.04***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

The material resources available to children in cohabiting-parent households were significantly different from those in married-parent households in France in 2007 and 2014 (Table 9.16). Children living in households headed by cohabiting parents have higher risks of suffering from material deprivation than their counterparts in married-parent families, while this relationship became weaker with the diffusion of cohabitation. After including both parents' education and employment situation into models, the significant association between parental union status and children's material deprivation risks remained in 2007, but it disappeared in 2014. Moreover, children of fathers and mothers with a tertiary education were less likely to be materially deprived than their counterparts with parents having a low education. Paternal unemployment and working with temporary job contracts raised their children's likelihood of experiencing material deprivation in both years, but for fathers' part-time employment, it was only statistically significant in 2014. In addition, mothers' part-time employment, unemployment, temporary job contracts reduced children's access to a higher level of material living conditions.

As shown in Table 9.17, there is not found a significant relationship found between parents' union status and their children's risks of experiencing material deprivation in Sweden in both 2006 and 2014. Fathers with a tertiary education enhanced their children's material living standard compared to lower-educated fathers. In addition, the effects of fathers' economic resources became more important over time. For instance, fathers worked in part-time jobs significantly increased their children's likelihood of being materially deprived compared to fathers who were employed full-time in 2014, but not in 2006. Mothers' lower educational levels, unemployment, and inactivity in the labor market were negatively associated with their children's material living standards. However, maternal part-time work and self-employment did not have a significant relationship with their children's material living conditions. Moreover, mothers' job contracts become more important to children's material living conditions over time.

Table 9.17: Ordinary least squares regression predicting the risk of material deprivation in Sweden in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.001	0.002	-0.001	-0.002	0.002	-0.001
Father's age >39		-0.001	-0.001		0.001	-0.001
Father's migrant		0.03***	0.01***		0.02***	0.01**
Mother's age >39		-0.004	-0.003		-0.004	-0.004
Mother's migrant		0.02***	0.01***		0.02***	0.01***
Number of children		0.004*	0.003**		0.003**	0.001
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.01			-0.01*
tertiary			-0.01***			-0.01*
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.01			0.01**
self-employment			-0.01*			-0.002
unemployed			0.06***			0.06***
inactive			0.04***			0.02**
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.01			0.001
others			0.004			0.003
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.01			-0.02***
tertiary			-0.01**			-0.03***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.0004			0.001
self-employment			-0.01			0.003
unemployed			0.03**			0.01**
inactive			0.03***			0.02***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.003			0.01*
others			-0.002		-0.02***	0.002
Intercept	0.02***	0.01***	0.02***	0.01***	0.002***	0.03***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 9.18: Ordinary least squares regression predicting the risk of material deprivation in the UK in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.03***	0.03***	0.02***	0.04***	0.04***	0.02***
Father's age >39		-0.01***	-0.01***		-0.01	-0.003
Father's migrant		0.02***	0.01***		0.02***	0.01*
Mother's age >39		-0.01	-0.01		-0.002	-0.01**
Mother's migrant		0.003	0.004		0.01	-0.002
Number of children		0.01***	0.004**		0.01***	0.003
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.01**			-0.01*
tertiary			-0.02***			-0.02***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.03**			0.04***
self-employment			-0.01			-0.01
unemployed			0.07***			0.1***
inactive			0.05***			0.06***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			-0.01			0.01
others			0.01			0.01
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02***			-0.02***
tertiary			-0.02***			-0.03***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.002			0.01**
self-employment			-0.01**			0.01
unemployed			0.04			0.08***
inactive			0.01			0.03**
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.01			0.01
others			0.01***			-0.002
Intercept	0.03***	0.02***	0.05***	0.05***	0.03***	0.06***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Results in Table 9.18 suggest that children living with cohabiting parents have a higher likelihood of being materially deprived than their counterparts in households headed by married parents in the UK in 2006 and 2014. After including both father's and mother's demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, and the household composition, the significantly positive association between parental cohabitation relative to marriage and children's material deprivation risks remained in both years. In addition, fathers' and mothers' educational levels were negatively related to the risk of non-monetary child poverty in both years. The higher the parental education level, the lower their children's risks of suffering from material deprivation. Moreover, fathers' part-time work, unemployment, or inactivity in the labor market were significantly related to a lower level of material living conditions of their children relative to fathers working in full-time jobs. In addition, the link between both father's and mother's employment situation and children's material deprivation risks became stronger over time. Children living with mothers being part-time employed, unemployed or inactive had significantly higher risks of being materially deprived compared to those living with full-time employed mothers solely in 2014 in the UK.

9.3 The link between parents' union status and child poverty risks over time

In order to explore the trend of the relationship between parental union status and child economic well-being over time, in particular, before and during the economic crisis, I pooled the 2006 and 2014 data and examined the interactions between parents' union status and year of observation. Each analysis includes two models. Model 1 examines the impact of the interaction between parents' union status and year of observation on child monetary poverty and material deprivation risks separately. Model 3 includes both parents' demographic traits, the household composition, and parents' socioeconomic characteristics as in the Model 3 of Table 9.1 - 9.18.

Table 9.19 presents results of analyses examined the interactions between parental union status and year of observation in the six European countries. In Spain, observed risks of child poverty after taxes and transfers significantly increased in cohabiting- and married -parent households from 2006 to 2014 (results of predicted probability see Appendix Figure A.1-A.3). Moreover, children living in cohabiting-parent households had increasingly higher risks of poverty after taxes and transfers compared to children in households headed by married parents over time. Nevertheless, results also reveal that the interaction between parental union status and year of

observation was not significant for either child poverty pre-tax and transfers or children's material deprivation risks. Results in the UK show an opposite trend that the risk of child poverty post-tax and transfers of cohabiting-parent households significantly declined from 2006 to 2014. In addition, risks of children suffering from material deprivation significantly declined over time in the Czech Republic and France.

Table 9.19: Interaction between parental union status and year of observation on child monetary poverty risks pre- and post-tax and transfer, and material deprivation in Spain, the Czech Republic, Germany, and France

	Post-tax and transfer poverty		Pre-tax and transfer poverty		Material deprivation	
	M 1	M 3	M 1	M 3	M 1	M 3
Spain						
Union status (ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.2	-0.5	0.1	0.01	0.04***	0.03***
Year (ref.=2006)						
2014	0.3***	0.2**	0.7***	0.7***	0.01***	0.005*
Union # year						
Cohabitation 2014	0.6**	0.8**	0.03	-0.1	-0.01	-0.01
Czech						
Union status (ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.9***	0.6*	0.9***	0.6**	0.1***	0.03***
Year (ref.=2006)						
2014	-0.3*	0.1	-0.3**	0.1	-0.02***	-0.01***
Union # year						
Cohabitation 2014	-0.2	-0.6	-0.1	-0.2	-0.03	-0.02**
Germany						
Union status (ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.8***	0.3	0.8***	0.4	0.02***	0.001
Year (ref.=2006)						
2014	-0.2*	0.2	-0.5***	-0.1	-0.02***	-0.01
Union # year						
Cohabitation 2014	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.01	0.002
France						
Union status (ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.03	0.2	0.1	0.4*	0.02***	0.02***
Year (ref.=2007)						
2014	-0.1	0.3*	-0.1	0.5***	-0.005*	0.004*
Union # year						
Cohabitation 2014	0.2	0.01	-0.01	-0.4*	-0.01	-0.01**

Notes: weights are applied and only part of the results are presented. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
Analysis for pre- and post-tax and transfer child monetary poverty uses binary logistic regression, and the estimate for child material deprivation uses the ordinary least-squares regression.

Table 9.19 (continued): Interaction between parental union status and year of observation on child monetary poverty risks pre- and post-tax and transfer, and material deprivation in Sweden and UK

Sweden						
Union status (ref.=married)						
cohabitation	-0.1	0.2	0.01	0.2	-0.001	-0.0001
Year (ref.=2006)						
2014	0.2	0.2	-0.01	-0.1	-0.01	-0.001
Union # year						
Cohabitation 2014	0.03	0.2	0.2	0.4	-0.001	-0.0004
UK						
Union status (ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.6***	0.6**	0.7***	0.7***	0.03***	0.02***
Year (ref.=2006)						
2014	-0.02	0.1	0.3***	0.6***	0.01***	0.02***
Union # year						
Cohabitation 2014	-0.4*	-0.7***	-0.3	-0.6**	0.01	0.01

Notes: weights are applied and only part of the results are presented. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.
Analysis for pre- and post-tax and transfer child monetary poverty uses binary logistic regression, and the estimate for child material deprivation uses the ordinary least-squares regression.

9.4 Decomposition of the child poverty gap between Spain and other European countries

Spain has persistently been shown to be one of the European Union countries with the highest child poverty rates. Moreover, the level of child poverty dramatically increased after Spain being severely hit by the Great Recession. Previous literature focused on the cross-national differentials in the labor market and governmental redistribution, and less attention has been paid to the contribution of demographic changes, that is, the disparities in the labor market opportunities and social benefits for parents in different living arrangements. By using the decomposition technique, analyses in the following section present the contribution of components corresponding to market income, governmental redistribution, and the prevalence of children in cohabitation in Spain compared with other five European countries.

Table 9.20: Decomposition of the observed gap in child poverty risks between Spain and the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Sweden, and the UK, in 2006 and 2014 (%).

	Total child poverty gap	Before taxes for married parents (F_β)	Pre-tax income by union status (F_μ)	Distribution of children (F_δ)	After taxes for married parents (F_α)	Post-tax income by union status (F_ω)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
2006						
Czech						
unstandardized	8.6	2.3	-0.9	-0.1	7.8	-0.5
standardized	100	27.1	-11.1	-1.6	91.7	-6.1
Germany						
unstandardized	5.9	-0.4	-0.8	-0.1	7.7	-0.5
standardized	100	-6.4	-12.9	-1.6	129.7	-8.8
France						
unstandardized	8.1	-0.5	0.1	0.3	7.2	-0.5
standardized	100	-6.9	1.8	5.0	107.6	-7.6
Sweden						
unstandardized	11.2	3.4	0.2	0.5	7.5	-0.3
standardized	100	30.0	1.7	4.8	66.7	-3.2
UK						
unstandardized	3.0	1.4	-1.0	-0.3	3.6	-0.6
standardized	100	45.8	-33.3	-10.8	118.7	-20.4
2014						
Czech						
unstandardized	17.9	14.6	-2.3	-0.7	5.6	0.7
standardized	100	81.2	-12.5	-3.6	31.2	3.8
Germany						
unstandardized	14.3	17.1	-2.9	0.1	-0.5	0.5
standardized	100	119.9	-20.4	0.6	-3.5	3.5
France						
unstandardized	14	10.4	0.3	-0.9	4.1	0.2
standardized	100	74.0	2.2	-6.6	29.0	1.3
Sweden						
unstandardized	16.3	13.7	-0.3	-0.5	1.9	1.6
standardized	100	83.6	-1.9	-2.8	11.6	9.5
UK						
unstandardized	11.2	7.8	-0.7	-0.4	3.7	1.0
standardized	100	68.9	-6.6	-3.5	32.5	8.7

Table 9.20 shows the results of the decomposition of the child poverty gap between Spain and the other five studied European countries. For each country, columns 2 to 6 demonstrate the

contribution of each of the five factors in the decomposition. Moreover, there are two rows for each nation. The first presents the absolute contributions to the total observed gap in the child poverty risk. The second row shows the relative contributions (as proportions of the total gaps), which add up to 100% due to additive characteristic of the decomposition technique.

Column 2 and column 3 present the contribution of the market income (household income before taxes and transfers) to the cross-national gap in the risk of child poverty. Column 2 shows the role of the F_β in the child poverty gap between Spain and each of the selected countries, which is calculated by the household income before taxes and transfers for families headed by married couples living with children, while holding all other factors constant across countries, including the ratio of pre-tax (and transfers) household income for children in cohabiting-parent households relative to the pre-tax household income for children living in households headed by married parents.

As shown in column 2, the gap in the market income for households headed by married parents between Spain and other nations raises the diversity in the risk of overall child poverty between the two countries when all other factors including the disparities in market income by parental union status were identical. These contributions to the overall child poverty gap were found between Spain and the Czech Republic (2.3%), Sweden (3.4%), UK (1.4%) in 2006. In 2014, the pre-tax and transfers poverty gap between Spain and other studied countries would be over 10% in all the studied countries except for the UK, contributing to over half of the observed poverty gap. These results indicate that even though all other factors were the same in Spain and a given country, the child poverty rate would still be higher in Spain due to the household income before taxes and transfers in married-parent households.

Column 3 presents the contribution of F_μ to the gap in overall child poverty risk between Spain and other selected nations. Results in column 3 are assessed by employing the ratio of before-tax poverty rate of children in cohabiting-parent families relative to the same rate for their counterparts in married-parent families, holding other factors constant across countries, including the effect of market income for children living with married parents. The results indicate the role of household income before taxes and transfers by parental union status in the overall child poverty gap between Spain and other countries. Similar to the results in column 2, the diversity in the market income between households headed by married parents and those headed by cohabiting parents across nations alone would yield child poverty rates in Spain that were 0.1% lower than in France and

0.2% in Sweden in 2006. However, the contribution of household income before tax and transfers by parental unions status is not a central factor in the overall child poverty gap (shown in the second row for each country). In addition, the contribution of this factor to the gap in the overall poverty between Spain and other countries remained modest in 2014. Nevertheless, the contributions of the factor turned from 0.1% in 2006 to 0.3% in 2014 in France. It means the market income by parental union status alone would provide France an advantage in child poverty relative to Spain.

Column 4 demonstrates the contribution of the distribution of children in cohabiting-parent and married-parent families (F_δ). As shown in Table 9.20, the differences in distribution appear to play a minor role in explaining the overall child poverty disparities in both 2006 and 2014. The contributions to the overall gap in child poverty risk between Spain and other selected countries appear to be negative with the exception of France (0.3%) and Sweden (0.5%) in 2006, and Germany (0.1%) in 2014. This result indicates that if the distribution of children's living arrangements in countries other than these nations were the same as those of their Spanish counterparts, they would not be poor as often as they are.

Column 5 and 6 present the contribution of taxes and transfers to the diversity in overall child poverty risks between Spain and a given country, amounting to the poverty gap after standardizing both the household income before taxes and transfers for each of the union type and the distribution of children's living arrangements across nations. Similar to column 2 showing the inequality in the labor market, column 5 demonstrates the contribution of taxes and transfers across nations for children living with married parents (F_α), while holding other factors constant, including the taxes and transfers to households consisting of cohabiting parents and children relative to the taxes and transfers to households headed by married parents.

Results in column 5 indicate that the cross-national differences in taxes and transfers to children in married-parent households, ignoring the differences by parental union status, account for a very large portion of the overall observed gap in the poverty risk between Spain and other countries in 2006. For example, taxes and transfers play an important role in explaining the gap in the overall child poverty risk between Spain and all other countries ranging from 3.6% in the UK, 7.8% in the Czech Republic, 7.5% in Sweden, 7.2% in France, to 7.7% in Germany. In 2014, the relative contributions of this factor were not as great as in 2006, ranging from 1.9 in Sweden to 5.6% in the Czech Republic. Therefore, the differences in taxes and transfers between cohabiting-

parent and married-parent households alone account for a major share of the poverty gap across nations in 2006.

Similar to column 3 showing the effect of market incomes by children's living arrangements on the gap of the overall child poverty between Spain and a given nation, column 6 presents the contribution of taxes and transfers for children in households headed by cohabiting parents relative to children in married-parent households, holding other factors constant across nations, including the level of taxes and transfers for children in married-parent families. It is calculated by the ratio of the after-tax (and transfers) poverty rate to the before-tax (and transfers) poverty rate for children in cohabiting-parent households relative to the same ratio for children in married-parent households (F_ω).

The results in column 6 indicate that differential poverty reductions through taxes and transfers by parental living arrangements in overall poverty risks were modest in most countries in 2006, which is different from our expectation. When all other factors were standardized, this factor alone lowers the overall child poverty gap between Spain all other studied nations in 2006, for example, the Czech Republic (-0.5%), Germany (-0.5%), France (-0.5%), Swden (-0.3%) and the UK (-0.6%). Cross-national differences in poverty reductions through taxes and transfers by children's living arrangements increase the poverty gap between Spain and all other studied countries in 2014. This indicates that this factor alone contributes to observed child poverty gap between Spain and Sweden (1.6%), France (0.2%), Germany (0.5%), the Czech Republic (0.7%), and the UK (1%) in 2014.

In sum, the results suggest that disparities in the level and effectiveness of tax and family policies contributed most to the overall child poverty gap between Spain and other selected countries in 2006; and the cross-national diversity in market incomes (before taxes and transfers) contribute most to the overall child monetary poverty gap between Spain and other studied nations in 2014. Moreover, the distribution effect suggests that the low prevalence of children living with cohabiting parents contributes to narrow the poverty gap between Spain and the most of other nations. I also examined the contribution of the demographic factor in the overall child poverty gap by showing to what extent do the labor market (market incomes) and social policies (taxes and transfers) vary according to children's living arrangements. In general, benefits from taxes and transfers by parents' union status are rarely a principal factor accounting for the child poverty gap between Spain and other studied countries.

Chapter 10   Conclusions

10.1   Introduction

Nonmarital cohabitation has become one of the most important family changes in the Western countries during recent decades. An increasing number of couples are forming their partnerships through cohabitation rather than direct marriage. Cohabitation has developed from a marginal phenomenon, a prelude to marriage and a stage in marriage to become finally an alternative to marriage, despite the fact that the pace of change varies across countries and across different sub-populations within one country. More importantly, marriage is no longer a prerequisite for having children. Instead, cohabitation has become a common context for childbearing and childrearing. Therefore, the rapid rise in the practice and acceptance of cohabitation in many countries may have essential implications for families with children.

The co-existence of lowest-low fertility and the low diffusion of cohabitation, together with the more rapid changes in family behavior relative to other Mediterranean countries, make Spain a very interesting case to study. The unique socioeconomic, cultural, and political background, especially intense secularization and liberalization after the end of the Franco regime, drives significant changes in non-traditional family formation patterns and people's attitudes. The substantial growth in the share of cohabiting parents living with children has raised concerns over the potential consequences for child well-being. In some countries, children living with cohabiting parents appear to have more disadvantages and poorer outcomes than children living with married parents, for example, economic well-being, health and emotional problems, academic performance and behavioral problems. Furthermore, these disadvantages may pass from generation to generation. Hence, cross-national comparison is useful to understand whether and how is parents' union status related to the economic well-being of children.

Five European countries, Sweden, France, Germany, the Czech Republic, and the UK, were chosen to be compared with Spain in order to explore the relationship between parents' living arrangements and children's economic well-being. The selection of these countries was based on three key classification schemes with regards to parental cohabitation and child poverty. First, these countries vary in terms of family changes, in particular, the prevalence of cohabitation and child-bearing and -rearing within cohabitation. Second, concerning that another main focus of this

thesis is on the economic well-being, the six countries also vary in terms child poverty risks and inequality. Third, differences in family policies, labor market policies, and institutionalization of cohabitation relative to marriage provide a strong incentive to study Spain with these European nations in a comparative perspective.

This study was divided into three main parts. The first part introduced the general theoretical approaches that explain changes in family behavior, in particular, union formation, focusing on three major arguments on micro-level determinants of union patterns: ideational change, family economics perspective, and Oppenheimer's theories on marriage timing and the delay of marriage. Moreover, this part also discussed institutional variations and how contextual framework (i.e. family policy and legal harmonization between marriage and cohabitation) may affect couples' union statuses. Then, some important issues concerning child poverty have been raised, including its definition, measurement and consequences as well as the potential relationship between parents' union statuses and child poverty. In order to better understanding changes in family behavior and the link with child poverty, the second part investigated the political, economic, and social context of the Spanish family, including political reforms from Franco's dictatorship up to the present, the structure of the labor market, welfare state and family policy, legal recognition of cohabitation, and shifts in attitudes and values. In addition, family transformations in Spain have been put in a comparative perspective, that is, the evolution of cohabitation, the trends of partnership formation, fertility patterns, union dissolution, and repartnering. In the third part of the thesis, an empirical analysis in Spain and other five European countries was conducted based on six hypotheses in order to explore the potential relationship between parental union statuses and child poverty risks in both monetary and non-monetary ways. Parents were compared by their union statuses in terms of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics at first. Then, I examined whether disparities in parents' education and employment situation by living arrangements account for the gap in child poverty risks between married- and cohabiting-parent households. Finally, the decomposition technique was applied to examine the contribution of institutional factors to the gap in child poverty risks between Spain and other European countries. The last chapter summarizes these analyzes and presents the main findings, as well as it discusses the link of empirical results with previous theories and studies in the context of Spanish society.

10.2   Summary of the main results

Children living in cohabiting-parent households have higher risks of material deprivation than children living in married-parent households in Spain in 2006 and 2014, while the results for risks of monetary child poverty vary across time. In 2014, children living with married parents fare better economically than those with cohabiting parents, but no significant relationship was found in 2006. Moreover, cohabiting-parent households in general have higher child poverty risks than married-parent households in many other studied countries. Then, the thesis goes on to explore what factors account for the differences in child poverty risks (including both monetary poverty and material deprivation).

One speculation for the disadvantages of cohabiting families relative to married ones suggests that differences between the two originate from the selection effect, i. e. that people who choose to cohabit have socioeconomic and demographic characteristics distinct from those who choose to marry. That is, parents who enter into cohabitation have pre-existing risks for poor outcomes of their children. Due to the lack of relevant literature in Spain, I compared socioeconomic and demographic profiles of cohabiting parents with married ones, as well as the differences with their counterparts in other European countries. The results suggest that cohabiting fathers are prone to have lower economic resources than married fathers. In Spain, cohabiting fathers had higher proportions of low education, but also high education than their married counterparts in 2006. Over time, the growth in the share of those holding a college degree among married fathers was greater than among cohabiting fathers. That is, disparities in education between married and cohabiting fathers have increased. The same results have been found for fathers in the other five European nations as well. In 2014, the educational gradient of cohabiting fathers in Spain became negative, implying that highly-educated fathers are more likely to be married than to cohabit compared to their lower-educated counterparts. Moreover, findings on fathers' employment conditions make clear that married fathers tend to have better employment conditions than cohabiting fathers in Spain in both years. Married fathers are more likely to have a full-time job and work with a permanent contract, and oppositely, cohabiting fathers have higher risks of being unemployed and holding a fixed-term job contract. Furthermore, not only did employment conditions of all fathers become growingly worse, but the gap between married and cohabiting fathers also widened over time in Spain.

Results for mothers in terms of the differences in the socioeconomic characteristics by their union statuses are mixed and change across countries and over time. In Spain, the percentage of having a tertiary education was higher among cohabiting mothers than among married mothers in 2006, but this relationship reversed in 2014. Furthermore, the proportion of mothers with tertiary education substantially improved over time and the rise was greater for married than cohabiting mothers. Furthermore, as maternal employment situation is taken into account, cohabiting mothers are more likely to work in full-time jobs and to be more involved in the labor market than married mothers in Spain. Nevertheless, they have higher risks of unemployment, and more importantly, a lower likelihood of holding a permanent job contract compared with married mothers. Hence, it indicates that although the labor market participation among married mothers is lower than among cohabiting mothers, the quality of their employment tends to be better than their cohabiting counterparts in Spain. In comparison with the other European nations, Spanish mothers have lower labor market participation (except for Germany and the UK), higher unemployment risks (except for the Czech Republic in 2006), and lower part-time employment (except for the Czech Republic).

After getting knowledge about the characteristics of cohabiting and married parents, I went on examining whether parental union statuses are related to child poverty risks by using multivariate analysis; and what accounts for the diversity between children in different living arrangements: union status *per se* or the selection effect. The relationship between parents' union status and risks of child monetary poverty has been examined by using two variables: the pre- and post- taxes and transfers monetary poverty. Recall that Hypothesis 1 predicted that children in cohabiting-parent households are more likely to be in monetary poverty than those in married-parent households, and the link between parents' union status and post-tax-and -transfer child poverty would be stronger than that with pre-tax-and -transfer child poverty. Results in Spain show that parents' living arrangements were not significantly associated with the risks of both pre- and post-taxes and transfers monetary child poverty in 2006, implying that parental cohabitation did not significantly differ from marriage in terms of the risks of child monetary poverty. However, in 2014, parents' union status became significantly linked to the child monetary poverty after taxes and transfers, whereas its relationship with pre-taxes and transfers child poverty remained statistically insignificant. Moreover, the association between parental living arrangements and children's monetary risks varies across countries. In Germany and the Czech Republic, cohabiting-parent families have significantly higher risks of child poverty than their married counterparts in

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2006 and 2014. On the contrary, there were no significant correlations found in France and Sweden. In the UK, parental cohabitation had a significantly positive relationship with the child monetary poverty before and after taxes and transfers in 2006. On the other hand, only the association with pre-taxes and transfers monetary poverty was found statistically significant in 2014. Consequently, in countries where cohabitation is less prevalent such as Spain, the Czech Republic, Germany, and the UK, children in cohabiting-parent families have a higher likelihood of being monetary poor than those in married-parent families. No significant association had been found in countries with a higher prevalence of cohabitation such as Sweden and France. Moreover, as the latter half of Hypothesis 1 is concerned, the opposite findings were found in Spain in 2014. On the one hand, children of cohabiting parents enjoy the same rights and benefits as children of married parents in Spain. On the other hand, cohabiting parents have become increasingly disadvantaged in education and employment situation compared to the married counterparts over time. Therefore, the gap in child monetary poverty between married- and cohabiting-parent families might become more obvious before redistribution.

Considering that monetary dimension may not be able to completely capture the nature of child poverty, I investigated the relationship between children's risks of experiencing material deprivation and their parents' living arrangements. In Spain, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, and the UK, children living with cohabiting parents have a higher likelihood of suffering from the enforced lack of material items than their counterparts with married parents in 2006 and 2014. These results confirm Hypothesis 2.

After adjustment for demographic traits, parents' socioeconomic characteristics are included into the models to see if the link between parental union status and child economic well-being is attributable to the selection effect. Results show that the relationship between parents' union patterns and risks of post-tax and transfers poverty remained significant in Spain in 2014 after controlling for demographic characteristics. However, this significant association disappeared after adding parents' education and employment situation into the model, which implies that paternal socioeconomic traits explain the disparities between married- and cohabiting-parent households. This result has also been observed in the Czech Republic and Germany in terms of the relationship between parental union status and post-taxes and transfers child poverty in 2006.

Results regarding children's material deprivation differ from those on child monetary poverty risks. Children's likelihood of suffering from the enforced lack of material items is strongly linked

to their parents' union status in Spain in both years and remained statistically significant after adjustment for both parents' socioeconomic and demographic traits in both years. Similar results have been found in Germany (in 2014), France (in 2007), the Czech Republic (in 2006), and the UK (in 2006 and 2014). Material deprivation is not only affected by household incomes, that is, the economic capability to afford material items, but it is also impacted by the contributions of both parents to the common goods of households and their patterns of consumption. If cohabitation is not as same as marriage for parents in terms of, for instance, attached meanings, nature, and commitments, cohabiting parents are less likely to pool their earnings or spend all their incomes to purchase household goods compared to their married counterparts even when they have the similar economic circumstances. Hence, parents' union status is more associated with their children's risks of being materially deprived than with the monetary poverty risks in most the studied nations. Recall that Hypothesis 3 predicted disparities in child monetary poverty and material deprivation risks could be explained by the selection effect or parental union status *per se*. In sum, findings with regards to disparities in child monetary poverty between married- and cohabiting-parent households in Spain imply that it is the pre-existing disadvantages of cohabiting parents compared to married parents that account for the fewer monetary resources available to their children, which support the selection effect hypothesis. Nevertheless, having sufficient income to purchase goods and services for households does not mean that these will necessarily be converted into these purchases (e.g. Alkire & Santos, 2014; Roelen, 2017). If parents choose not to spend all their income on household items due to their lesser commitments or the instability of their union, the living standards of their children would be reduced, but incomes would not reflect this situation. Results concerning the link between parents' living arrangements and children's material deprivation risks in Spain do not support the selection effection hypothesis. Furthermore, cohabiting-parent households are more distinct from their married counterparts in terms of material conditions than monetary poverty in Spain and most of the other European countries. Material deprivation can directly reflect a much wider array of the multifarious manifestations of poverty (Hulme, 2015), and thereby better capture the actual association between parental union status and children's economic well-being.

As the link between parents' socioeconomic characteristics and child poverty risks is concerned, both fathers' and mothers' education have significantly negative relationship with the risks of child monetary poverty pre-and post-taxes and transfers in Spain and most of the selected

nations. Fathers' education plays a more important role in pre- than post-taxes and transfers child poverty. In addition, risks of child monetary poverty were reduced with the growth of mothers' education, and their relative importance is higher than paternal education in Spain. Likewise, fathers' and mothers' education are shown to be negatively related to the severity of material deprivation in Spain. The higher the education of parents, the lower the risks of their children suffering from the enforced lack of deprivation items. Moreover, the association of fathers' tertiary education with their material conditions remained statistically significant over time while that with paternal middle education disappeared in 2014. As the employment situation is concerned, fathers' employment is more related to the risks of child monetary poverty before taxes and transfers than to the post-taxes and transfers child poverty risks. In addition, the adverse impacts of unemployment and working with temporary job contracts on both monetary and non-monetary child poverty have elevated from 2006 to 2014 in Spain. It is noteworthy that part-time employment of men became significantly related to higher risks of monetary and non-monetary child poverty in Spain in 2014, which implies a rapid increase in employment precariousness of men and its negative effect on children's economic well-being over time.

Finally, I explored the contributions of three key macro factors, that is, market income, governmental redistribution, and the prevalence of cohabitation towards disparities in child monetary poverty risks between Spain and five European countries by applying the standardization and decomposition technique used by Heuveline and Weinshenker (2008) in their study regarding child poverty in the US. Recall that Hypothesis 4 predicted that the low prevalence of children living with cohabiting parents contributes to narrow the poverty gap between Spain and most other nations. However, results show that the differences in the prevalence of children across parental living arrangements did not significantly contribute to the child poverty gap between Spain and most other studied nations. In addition, contributions of the demographic factor to the overall child poverty gap were examined by estimating to what extent do the labor markets (market incomes) and social welfare (taxes and transfers) vary across children's living arrangements. Results present that the cross-national diversity in market incomes (before taxes and transfers) and the disparity in the level and effectiveness of taxation and social welfare benefits contribute most to the overall child poverty gap in Spain relative to the other studied countries in different years. At one end of the spectrum, market income differences account for more than half of the cross-national diversity in child poverty risks in 2014, which confirm the first part of Hypothesis 5. However, results show

that disparities in market income between married- and cohabiting-parent households were not a principal factor accounting for the gap in child monetary poverty between Spain and the other studied countries. Thus, the second part of Hypothesis 5 was not supported. At the other end of the spectrum, disparities in governmental redistribution through tax and transfers contributed more to the differences in the child poverty between Spain and other studied nations in 2006, which support the first part of Hypothesis 6. Moreover, the governmental redistribution to children living in cohabiting-parent households relative to those in married-parent households was not a major factor that contributes to the child poverty gap between Spain and the other studied countries. Thus, the second part of Hypothesis 6 was rejected.

10.3 Findings and discussion

After the death of Franco, Spain has experienced a set of transformations in politics, economy, and culture, following the path of secularization and modernization. The enacting of the 1978 Spanish Constitution marked the transition of Spain from dictatorship to democracy. The political reforms paved the way for a dramatic development in a broad range of social, economic, cultural fields. More importantly, it marked a milestone in female rights in that women have equal rights to men in all aspects of life, including education, employment, and family issues (Jones, 1997; Carrasco & Rodríguez, 2000). Moreover, children born outside of marriage were granted the same rights as children born to married parents. The 1978 Constitution also explicitly grants the same social rights to every citizen in education, health, housing, and pensions (Guillén & León, 2011). During the past decades, women's enrolment in tertiary education has substantially risen and at present it exceeds men's. I observed that this trend has persisted until current times, and with the expansion of higher education in Spain the degree of the increase is greater among women than men. Moreover, female participation in the labor market has steadily made progress over the last few decades as well (Miret-Gamundi, 2006; Cárceles, 2006; Pérez-Diaz, 2007; Guner, Kaya, & Sánchez-Marcos, 2014). Secularization and transition to democracy are also reflected in some family issues such as the legalization of birth control, the approval of divorce, and the liberalization of abortion (Solsten & Meditz, 1988), and the legalization of same-sex marriages. In addition, the prevalence of post-materialist norms and values emphasizing self-fulfillment, together with

changing attitudes toward marriage, family and parenthood, all these factors account for the dramatic shifts in family behavior in Spain.

Families in Spain, like in other Western countries, have experienced sharp transformations, including the increase in divorce, the decline and postponement of marriage, and a dramatic decline in fertility (explicitly discussed in Chapter 6). However, these family changes were not accompanied by a wide spread of cohabitation in relation to what had earlier occurred in other European nations. Moral sanctions in tune with the strong Catholic tradition were initially suggested as a major reason for low cohabitation (Domínguez-Folgueras & Castro-Martín, 2013). However, as demonstrated in Chapter 5, people in Spain actually have a high level of tolerance and acceptance of "new" family forms and childbearing outside of marriage, which refutes the argument concerning religious and cultural barriers to the rise in cohabitation. Thus, the peculiarities of the Mediterranean family formation pattern and institutional factors may explain the low diffusion of cohabitation in Spain. Specifically, the prolonged co-residence of adult children with parents and the high synchronization of the departure from parental home, family formation and fertility may have potential effects on the prevalence of cohabitation and characteristics of Spanish cohabitors. Concerning that living with parents can save money and is common in Spain among young adults (thus, it is not necessarily caused by cultural pressure or biases), those who cohabit may achieve some certain economic conditions or may have different characteristics from cohabitors in other countries, at least at the beginning of the diffusion of cohabitation.

In line with the Second Demographic Transition theory, highly-educated people are suggested to hold more liberal attitudes and values, accept more advanced ideas, and practice new family behavior than the less-educated in that education is often seen as a proxy for ideational changes or cultural innovations. Descriptive results in Spain display that proportions of cohabiting fathers and mothers[28] with tertiary education were higher than their married counterparts in 2006, which implies that cohabitation might be viewed as a new lifestyle choice or a rejection of unequal gender roles attached to traditional marriage at the start of the diffusion of cohabitation. However, the link

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[28] The result in 2006 is different from our previous study regarding maternal education and their union status by using the Spanish Vital Statistics. The different results of the two studies can be interpreted by the diversity in the focus groups. In the previous study, we focused on mothers who were interviewed just after giving birth. Whereas, this study focused on mothers whose children were in the different age groups and included biological, adopted, and step-mothers due to the data limitation.

between parents' education and living arrangements reversed in 2014 so that married parents became more advantaged in education over their cohabiting counterparts.

As employment is concerned, the Spanish labor market is characterized by pervasive long-term unemployment, strong gender- and age-based segmentation, low job security, and ill-equipped public employment services. The constraints on female labor market participation, especially for mothers under the Franco's dictatorship, and its long-lasting effects on social attitudes, the dysfunctional labor market, and low family welfare, all these factors contributed to the low female labor force involvement in Spain. Results show that cohabiting mothers have some advantages in employment over married mothers in Spain, which may be because cohabitation is related to less traditional ideology. Nevertheless, these advantages are just in some dimensions of employment (the labor force participation and full-time employment) but not in others (unemployment and permanent job contract), and more importantly, advantages are declining or even disappearing over time. Moreover, men's employment has become increasingly precarious and unstable as exemplified by the rise in unemployment, involuntary part-time job, and nonstandard employment relations. It is noteworthy that the employment situation of married fathers appears to be increasingly better than cohabiting fathers over time in Spain. The socioeconomic divergence in marriage and cohabitation has growingly been linked with increased economic inequality, in particular, with men's deteriorating employment and earnings prospects. Previous research from the US observed a troubling divergence in the partnership formation according to couples' socioeconomic characteristics, with more stable family structure among the highest-educated segment of the population while more fragile forms of union were widespread among the less-educated one. In addition, increasingly empirical studies in Europe also find that the rise in economic uncertainty and instability result from changes in the labor market and economic inequality may have produced shifts in patterns of family formation and dissolution such as choosing cohabitation over marriage (e.g. Vignoli, Tocchioni, & Salvini, 2016). As a consequence, it seems that men and women with different income and educational levels tend to follow divergent paths through partnership formation. Although people with higher education and better economic conditions were likely to be forerunners of cohabitation in Spain, cohabitation may have gradually become a strategy for couples to confront uncertainty and financial insecurity. Most importantly, these potential associations may have become greater among parents and, thus, changes in family demographics may have been exacerbating social class disparities in children's

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access to economic resources. Whereas more economically advantaged people are prone to choose marriage and give birth and/or rear their children within marriage, more disadvantaged people have higher probabilities of cohabitation and child-bearing and -rearing within unmarried cohabitation.

As to the relationship between living arrangements and child poverty risks in Spain, parents' union statuses were significantly related to risks of monetary child poverty in 2014 as well as the likelihood of material deprivation in both 2006 and 2014. The negative association between parental cohabitation and child monetary poverty risk can be attributable to paternal employment status, but the link with children's risks of being materially deprived remained significant after adjustment for both parents' economic resources and other control variables. By only using the monetary means, we assume that there is a direct link between economic resources (income) and living conditions. Nevertheless, households with the same level of income do not necessarily share the same living standards. Empirical evidence from the US demonstrates that even when cohabiting parents had the same income as their married counterparts, children living in cohabiting-parent households would be prone to suffer more material hardship than those in married-parent households (Kenney, 2003). Likewise, my findings in Spain suggest the children's economic well-being depends not only on household's income but on factors beyond the ability of households to meet basic needs such as parental union status. Previous studies suggested that differences in the nature of cohabitation lead to disparities in couples' or parents' investments in household public goods, and in turn, result in higher risks for children in cohabiting-parent households relative to those in households headed by married parents of experiencing material deprivation (Bauman, 1999; Kenney, 2003). Therefore, the use of data on both material deprivation and monetary poverty reveals the potential disparities in the organization of household finances and in the contributions to public goods of households and children between cohabiting and married parents in Spain.

There are two possible explanations with regards to the disparities in resource allocation and money management by parents' union types: stability or commitment of couples' relationship and biological relationship with children (Desai, 1992; Treas, 1993; Kenney, 2004). First, cohabitors are often less committed to their relationship and children than their married counterparts, which leads to disparities in their investments to household common goods and the way to manage money. On the one hand, the legal commitment of cohabitation is lower than that of marriage. Marriage

entails a legally enforceable contract so that the joint investments can be protected against the event of union dissolution (Poortman & Mills, 2012). Moreover, the legal rights and obligations of fathers are automatically granted to married fathers, while for unmarried cohabiting fathers, they need to take steps to establish their legal bond with their children. Therefore, the relatively lower legal commitment of cohabitation relative to marriage may lead to lower investments of cohabitors to households and children. On the other hand, marriage entails higher interpersonal commitment than cohabitation. Couples in different living arrangements usually have diverse expectations on the continuity of their unions, which affect the allocation of their resources and investment to household common goods. Concerning that marriage implies a long-term time horizon, couples may be more willing to make joint investments and pool their resources together. Oppositely, cohabitors would be more cautious due to the inherent uncertainty of their unions and the absence of legal protection. As Desai (1992, p693) stated that "one or both partners in consensual unions would choose to hold on to their personal income and invest less in the marriage (relationship) and children than partners in unions based on a greater degree of commitment".

Second, the patterns of money management and resource allocation may also rely on the biological relationship between parents and children, that is, whether parents are living with their joint biological children or not; and whether they have biological offspring from a previous union but live elsewhere or not (Case, Lin, & McLanahan, 2000; Kenney, 2004). One interpretation is that fathers who are not biologically related to children may not have the expectation of receiving transfers of money and time from the children later in life and thereby invest less on non-biologically related children (Case, Lin, & McLanahan 2000). Kenney (2004) found that the biological relationship between fathers and children in the household affect their contributions to household expenses. And cohabiting parents living with only joint biological children are similar to their married counterparts in terms of money management. Nevertheless, DeLeire and Kalil (2005) argued that biological fathers in cohabiting unions may also have different values, lifestyles, and expectations compared to their married counterparts. It implies that the biological relatedness of parents to the children in the households may contribute to, although not completely explain, differences in children's material conditions between married- and cohabiting-parent households.

Finally, child poverty in Spain stands out unfavorably in cross-national comparisons with other European countries, especially after the Great Recession. Results suggest that international differences in market income and government redistribution contribute most to the gap in child

poverty risks between Spain and the other countries. In Spain, on the one hand, cohabiting parents were more likely to have a high education and had relatively fewer differences in employment situation compared to their married counterparts in 2006. On the other hand, Spanish family policy is relatively underdeveloped and "unfriendly" towards family and working mothers in that the government does not put it as the primary goal to achieve. Although new policies and programmes have been developed, some of them appear to be more symbolic than real, with very limited influence. In 2006, governmental redistribution through taxes and transfers made greatest contributions to the observed gap in child poverty risks between Spain and Germany. This may be related to the decisive reform of German family policy in that year (as discussed in Chapter 3). Therefore, government redistribution made a greater contribution to the gap in child poverty risks between Spain and other selected nations in 2006. After being severely hit by the Great Recession, family policies have been subject to dramatic budget cuts in Spain. The labor market was more strongly affected by the crisis, which led to drastic rise in unemployment rates and a considerable risk of poverty and social exclusion. Results in 2014 show that cross-national disparities in child poverty risks increased, and market incomes contributed more to the poverty gap than governmental redistributions. Socioeconomic characteristics of cohabiting parents have become more diverse from that of married parents over time in Spain, implying that children in cohabiting-parent households are more vulnerable to the economic crisis than children in married-parent households. The relatively less education makes cohabiting parents more likely to lose their jobs and more difficult to find a new job. Although a proportion of people chose to go back to school in order to get higher degrees to increase their job opportunities, results show that the rise in the share of tertiary education is higher among married than cohabiting parents. Moreover, the advantages in employment situation of married parents relative to cohabiting parents have become greater over time so that cohabitation may have become more likely to be adopted by men with lower economic resources due to their incapability to meet the "bar" for marriage, especially during the financial crisis. Therefore, the relatively poorer social welfare and worse labor market standards of Spain, plus the influence of the financial crisis, resulted in higher risks of child poverty in Spain than in other studied European nations.

10.4   Limitations and future research perspectives

The findings of this thesis are subjected to several limitations. The main limitation lies in the lack of information on the biological relationship between minor children and co-residence parents. Although the information on the relationship between parents and children are available, there are not distinctions between biological parents, social parents, adoptive parents, step-parents, etc. In other words, it is impossible to distinguish children living with both biological parents with those living with only one natural parent, or with those in other situations. As suggested in the previous literature, the biological relatedness of parents to children plays an important role in the money management and resources allocation within households, which thereby may further explain the disadvantages in material conditions of children in cohabiting-parent households compared to those in households headed by married parents. The importance of the biological relationship is also shown in another aspect. If the biological information on parent-children relationship was available, the association between children's economic well-being and parental union status will be clearer. Furthermore, it is even possible to obtain knowledge about the distinction in the union formation after childbearing by mothers' socioeconomic characteristics from a life-course perspective. Moreover, the EU-SILC database does not provide a household grid, which is a limitation in child poverty research and a common problem in studies using the same dataset (see more details in Chapter 7). Hence, differences in the composition of children's households headed by married parents relative to cohabiting parents are not so clear, which may play a role in child poverty risks. Despite the fact that many scholars have urged the EU-SILC to provide a full household grid (including the biological relationship) (e.g. Iacovou, Kaminska, & Levy 2012), it is not still available in the latest dataset.

Second, the definition and measurement of child poverty. Taking both the availability and comparability into consideration, both monetary and non-monetary aspects are used to define and measure child poverty, that is, the income poverty (including the pre- and post-taxes and transfers poverty) and material deprivation. The EU-SILC provides a set of comparable variables on different resources on incomes, which are unique and valuable for the cross-national research on the link between child economic well-being and parental living arrangements. In terms of monetary child poverty, the most significant drawback is the essentially arbitrary cutoff point (the poverty line/ threshold), the equivalised household income below which children are defined as

poor (Callan & Nolan, 1991). As stated in Chapter 7, there are different ways to set the cutoff point. In this study, taking the monetary poverty after taxes and transfers for example, I tried to examine the association of parents' union status with the equivalised household disposable income directly and with different poverty thresholds: 50% or 70% of median equivalised income, in case some information on child monetary poverty was missing. However, results turned out not to be much different from those of 60% poverty line concerning the extent to which parents' economic resources can explain the relationship with children's living arrangements in Spain. Furthermore, in order to know the potential effect of taxes and social transfers, child monetary poverty was examined before and after taxes and social transfers by using the variables on gross incomes. Nevertheless, considering that the data on income components may be collected either gross or net of taxes, different countries use three main approaches to convert net into gross: microsimulation models; matching survey data with fiscal data; or statistical methods (Iacovou, Kaminska, & Levy, 2012). For all the nations studied in this study, the flag variables in 2014, for instance, show that data collection was mainly gross, but a small proportion was net and gross in Spain; gross in the Czech Republic, Germany, and Sweden; and mainly net and gross in France. Hence, it is necessary to be aware of the potential problems on the comparability of the net-gross conversion in a future study (Verma & Betti 2010).

Third, arguments on the definition and measurement of material deprivation. Material deprivation is applied as one dimension of child economic well-being and to some extent to compensate for the shortcomings of income-based measures. There are various methodological approaches regarding the measurement of material deprivation being developed, but we need to have more clarity and precision in relation to their advantages and disadvantages, including their appropriateness and comparability across countries. A special module of the EU-SILC on material deprivation provides more variables on material items, but the first one was launched in 2009, which means that a lot of information on the prevalence of cohabitation in Spain would not be available. Therefore, it is possible to trace the change in children's risks of being materially deprived by their living arrangements with the spread of cohabitation through the reexamination the relationship between parental union status and children's material deprivation again by including more items on children's material deprivation when the next version of this module is available.

Fourth, results only suggest potential differences in socioeconomic traits between parents by their union statuses, but it remains unclear whether couples' decision on their union formation differ from that of parents after adjustment for other characteristics between the two. The EU-SILC dataset consists of a cross-sectional file and a longitudinal file, but a number of variables are not present in both files. In other words, not all the variables available in the cross-sectional file can be accessed in the longitudinal one, and there is no way of linking the two databases. In addition, due to the limitation of the sample size of cohabitors, it is impossible to compare and examine the relationship of the union status of couples with or without children with their socioeconomic characteristics by their age cohorts and other traits. Moreover, it is not possible to examine whether the effect of couples' economic resources on their union formations differ by the presence of children. If the socioeconomic profiles of parents are distinct from their childless counterparts, future studies on cohabitation and children's well-being should be aware of this diversity.

Despite the limitations stated above, the thesis fills the gap in child poverty studies in Spain by taking different types of parental union status into account. The main aim of the thesis was to examine the potential gap in the economic well-being of children living with cohabiting and married parents in Spain compared with other European countries covering a range of cohabitation diffusion levels, child poverty, and welfare states. Results suggest that cohabiting fathers' education and employment situation are generally lower than their married counterparts, while results for the socioeconomic characteristics of cohabiting mothers compared to married mothers are mixed in Spain. Notwithstanding, from the general trend is comparatively clear that parents with higher economic resources are more inclined to bear and rear children within marriage rather than cohabitation, which are consistent with the evidence from previous studies in other countries.

In line with hypotheses, children living in households headed by cohabiting parents fare worse in terms of their economic well-being than those in married-parent households, and the economic disadvantages of children in cohabiting-parent households relative to those in married-parent households increased over time in Spain. Moreover, social welfare through taxes deduction and social transfers plays a more important role in the reduction of child monetary poverty in cohabiting-parent households than their married counterparts. In addition, parents' socioeconomic characteristics can explain the differences in child monetary poverty between households headed by married and cohabiting parents but not the disparities in children's material conditions between

the two. This means that some other characteristics of cohabitation or cohabitors compared to their married counterparts may account for this diversity, for example, the lower commitments to each other and children or the instability of cohabiting unions. Furthermore, the results suggest that disparities in the labor market and social welfare contribute more to the child poverty gap between Spain and other European nations considered. Although the distribution of children in different living arrangements does not make a significant contribution to the child poverty gap, it has become increasingly important with the spread of cohabitation and child-bearing and -rearing in cohabitation in Spain compared to other nations.

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Appendix

Table A. 1: Percentage of households of married, never-married cohabiting and other cohabiting parents in the six European countries, in 2006 and 2014 (including intergenerational households)

			2006				2014		
		Married	Never-married cohabitor	Other cohabitor	Total	Married	Never-married cohabitor	Other cohabitor	Total
Spain	N	3,376	143	86	3,605	2,722	236	115	3,073
	%	93.7	4.0	2.4	100.0	88.6	7.7	3.7	100.0
Czech	N	1541	67	91	1,699	1,220	157	101	1,478
	%	90.7	3.9	5.4	100.0	82.5	10.6	6.8	100.0
Germany	N	2,793	84	115	2,992	1,823	106	92	2,021
	%	93.4	2.8	3.8	100.0	90.2	5.2	4.6	100.0
France†	N	2,173	508	173	2,807	1,797	749	161	2,707
	%	76.1	17.8	6.1	100.0	66.4	27.7	6.0	100.0
Sweden	N	1,431	528	144	2,103	1,006	360	117	1,483
	%	68.1	25.1	6.9	100.0	67.8	24.3	7.9	100.0
UK	N	1,841	212	124	2,177	1,623	301	86	2,010
	%	84.6	9.7	5.7	100.0	80.8	15.0	4.3	100.0

Notes: never-married cohabitor refers to both cohabiting parents were never married at the time of interview; other cohabitor refers to at least one of the cohabiting parents were divorced, widowed, or separated. Households include parents both aged 20-64.
†Data for France are from 2007 because gross income was not available in France until 2007.

Table A. 2: Indicator of housing conditions

Housing conditions	Variables in EU-SILC
Leaking roof, damp walls/floors/foundations, or rot in window frames or floor	HH040
Accommodation too dark	HS160
No bath or shower in dwelling	HH080
No indoor flushing toilet for sole use of household	HH090

Note: The indicator of housing conditions, including housing comfort and housing facilities, is applied by Guio and Maquet (2007) and Fusco, Guio, and Marlier (2013).

Table A. 3: Ordinary least-squares regression predicting the risk of housing deprivation in Spain in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
cohabitation	0.02**	0.01*	0.01*	0.02***	0.02**	0.02**
Father's age >39		-0.01*	-0.01*		0.002	-0.001
Father's migrant		0.01	0.01		0.02**	0.02**
Mother's age >39		0.001	0.001		-0.01*	-0.01*
Mother's migrant		0.003	0.002		-0.01	-0.01
Number of children		0.004	0.004		0.002	0.001
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.01*			-0.01
tertiary			-0.01***			-0.01
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.02			-0.004
self-employment			-0.1*			0.003
unemployed			0.02			0.004
inactive			0.004			0.002
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.02***			0.003
others			0.04*			-0.01
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			0.002			-0.002
tertiary			0.001			-0.004
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.001			-0.004
self-employment			-0.01			0.01
unemployed			-0.003			0.01
inactive			0.001			0.02**
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.01*			-0.001
others			-0.0001			0.001
Intercept	0.04***	0.04***	0.04***	0.03***	0.03***	0.04***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table A. 4: Percentage of monetary poverty among households of married, never-married cohabiting and other cohabiting parents in Spain, in 2006 and 2014

	2006			2014			
	Married	Never-married cohabiting	Other cohabiting	Married	Never-married cohabiting	Other cohabiting	
Post-tax poverty							
not poverty	80.6	82.9	85.9	74.6	67.7	68.9	*
at poverty	19.4	17.1	14.2	25.4	32.3	31.1	
Pre-tax poverty							
not poverty	83.0	81.5	80.9	70.37	67.83	65.97	
at poverty	17.0	18.5	19.1	29.63	32.17	34.03	

Note: Data are weighted. Households include parents both aged 20-64 and without the presence of grandparents. Chi-squared tests are tested, ***$p<0.01$, **$p<0.05$, *$p<0.1$.

Table A. 5: Binary: logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary poverty pre- and post-tax and transfers in Spain in 2006 (including married, never-cohabiting, and other cohabiting parents)

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
Never-married cohabiting	-0.2	-0.05	-0.3	0.1	0.2	-0.1
Other cohabiting	-0.3	-0.4	-0.3	0.1	0.1	0.6
Father's age >39		0.1	-0.02		0.1	-0.1
Father's migrant		0.2	0.2		-0.02	-0.3
Mother's age >39		0.1	0.02		0.2	0.1
Mother's migrant		0.5*	0.8**		0.5**	0.9**
Number of children		0.5***	0.5***		0.4***	0.5***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.5**			-0.4**
tertiary			-1.1***			-1.3***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.2			0.5
self-employment			0.9*			0.9
unemployed			1.5***			1.9***
inactive			1.0***			2.0***

(Continued)

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	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.7***			1.0***
others			0.8			0.8
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.2			-0.3
tertiary			-0.6***			-0.5**
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.8***			0.8***
self-employment			1.0			1.0***
unemployed			1.5***			1.4***
inactive			1.8***			1.7***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.7***			0.7***
others			1.0***			0.8***
Intercept	-1.4***	-2.3***	-4.4***	-1.6***	-2.5***	-4.5***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table A. 6: Binary logistic regression predicting the risk of monetary poverty pre- and post-tax and transfers in Spain in 2014 (including married, never-cohabiting, and other cohabiting parents)

	Post-tax and transfers			Pre-tax and transfers		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
Never-married cohabiting	0.3*	0.5**	0.4	0.1	0.2	-0.04
Other cohabiting	0.3	0.05	-0.1	0.2	-0.04	-0.4
Father's age >39		-0.04	-0.2		0.1	0.1
Father's migrant		1.0***	0.9***		0.8***	0.7***
Mother's age >39		0.2	0.4*		0.1	0.3
Mother's migrant		0.7***	0.4		0.9***	0.6**
Number of children		0.4***	0.4***		0.3***	0.4***
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.7***			-0.7***
tertiary			-1.1***			-1.3***

(Continued)

(Continued)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.1***			1.5***
self-employment			0.5			0.7*
unemployed			1.9***			2.9***
inactive			-0.2			3.2***
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.4***			1.9***
others			1.3			0.8**
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.4**			-0.4**
tertiary			-0.8***			-0.6***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			1.2***			1.3***
self-employment			0.7*			1.2***
unemployed			1.7***			2.0***
inactive			1.4***			1.6***
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			1.1***			1.3***
others			1.4***			1.1***
Intercept	-1.1***	-2.1***	-4.3***	-0.9***	-1.8***	-4.7***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table A. 7: Ordinary least-squares regression predicting the risk of material deprivation in Spain in 2006 and 2014 (including married, never-cohabiting, and other cohabiting parents)

	2006			2014		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Union status						
(ref.=married)						
Never-married cohabiting	0.03***	0.03***	0.02**	0.03***	0.03***	0.02***
Other cohabiting	0.04***	0.03**	0.03***	0.02**	0.01	-0.003
Father's age >39		0.01	0.01		-0.004	-0.01
Father's migrant		0.04***	0.03***		0.1***	0.04***
Mother's age >39		-0.01	-0.01		0.03	0.002
Mother's migrant		0.03***	0.03***		0.04***	0.02**
Number of children		0.01	0.01		0.01***	0.01**
Father's education						
(ref.=less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02***			-0.003
tertiary			-0.02***			-0.02***
Father's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			-0.02			0.02*
self-employment			-0.01			-0.01
unemployed			0.03**			0.05***
inactive			0.03**			0.01
Father's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.03***			0.02***
others			-0.003			0.02*
Mother's education						
(ref.= less than lower secondary)						
upper secondary			-0.02***			-0.02***
tertiary			-0.03***			-0.03***
Mother's employment						
(ref.= full-time employed)						
part-time			0.002			0.01
self-employment			-0.01			-0.01
unemployed			0.01**			0.03***
inactive			0.01*			0.01**
Mother's contract						
(ref.= permanent)						
temporary			0.01*			0.01**
others			0.01*			0.02***
Intercept	0.04***	0.01	0.03*	0.06***	0.03***	0.03***

Note: weights are applied. Models also include missing categories. ***p <0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table A. 8: Distribution of missing data in the six countries, in 2006 and 2014 (%)

2006	Spain	Czech	Germany	France†	Sweden	UK
Material deprivation	0.4	0	2.7	0.5	3.3	0.1
Maternal education	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.6	13.4
Paternal job	0	0	0	0.3	0.8	1.9
Paternal contract*	0	0	9.7	11.4	54.3	15.5
Paternal birth place	0	0	0.03	0	0.3	0
Maternal education	0.02	0	0	0.3	0.8	4.4
Maternal job	0	0	0	0.3	1.4	1.9
Maternal contract*	0.1	0.2	33.9	15.9	57.6	26.4
Maternal birth place	0	0	0	0	0.3	0
N	3,382	1,623	2,972	2,828	2,094	2,139
2014						
Material deprivation						
Paternal education	0.4	0	0	2.2	0.9	2.4
Paternal job	0	0	0	1.0	0.4	0.03
Paternal contract*	0.5	0	0	7.1	53.5	9.9
Paternal birth place	0.2	0	0	0	2.9	0
Maternal education	0.2	0	0	1.5	0.8	1.8
Maternal job	0	0	0	0.7	0.8	0
Maternal contract*	0	0	0	10.9	54.9	20.3
Maternal birth place	0	0	0.1	0	0	0
N	1,423	2,011	2,893	2,689	1,479	1,973

*Missing data of contract type includes "not selected respondent" and "missing". Data in all the Nordic countries are collected through administrative registers, hence, there is a high share of missing values in contract type in Sweden.
†Data of France was from 2007 because gross income was not available in France until 2007.
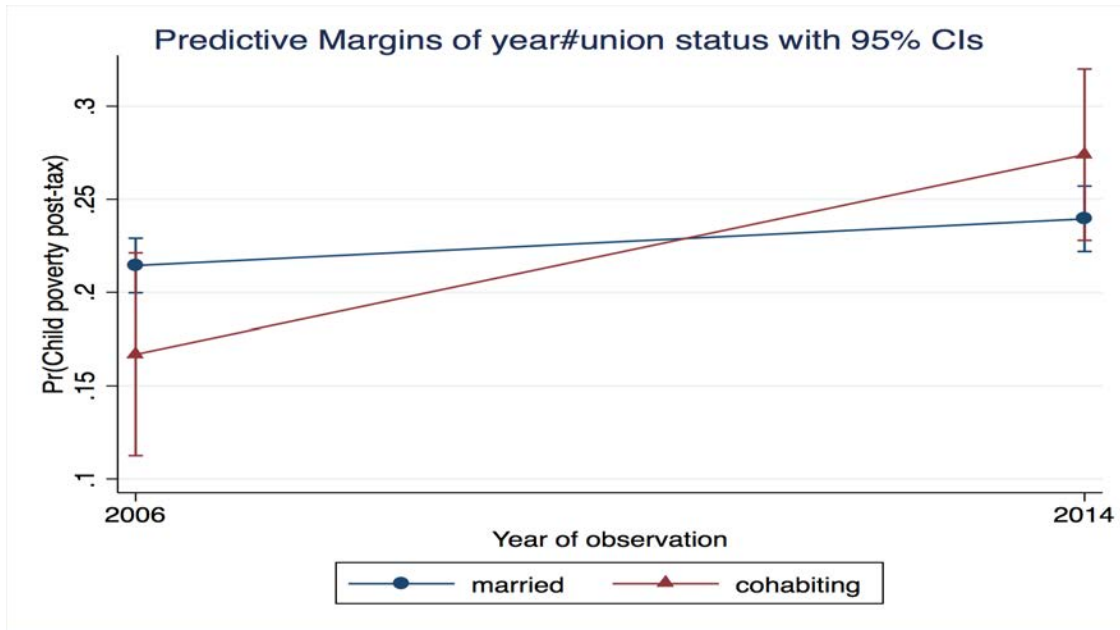
Figure A. 1: Predicted probabilities of child monetary poverty after taxes and transfers by parental union status and year of observation in Spain (model 3)
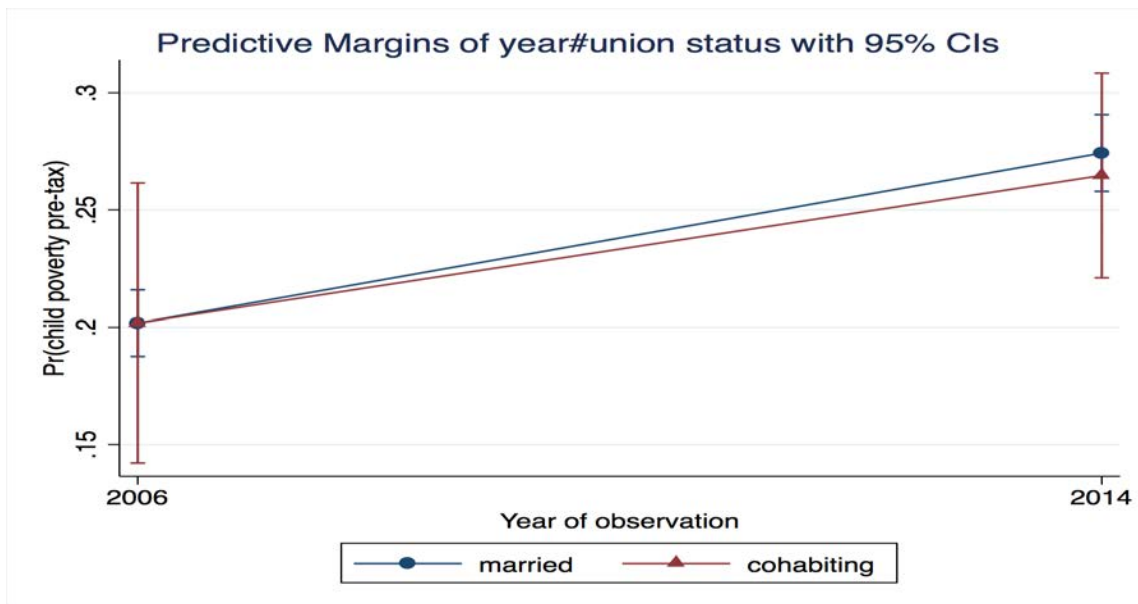

Figure A. 2: Predicted probabilities of child monetary poverty before taxes and transfers by parental union status and year of observation in Spain (model 3)
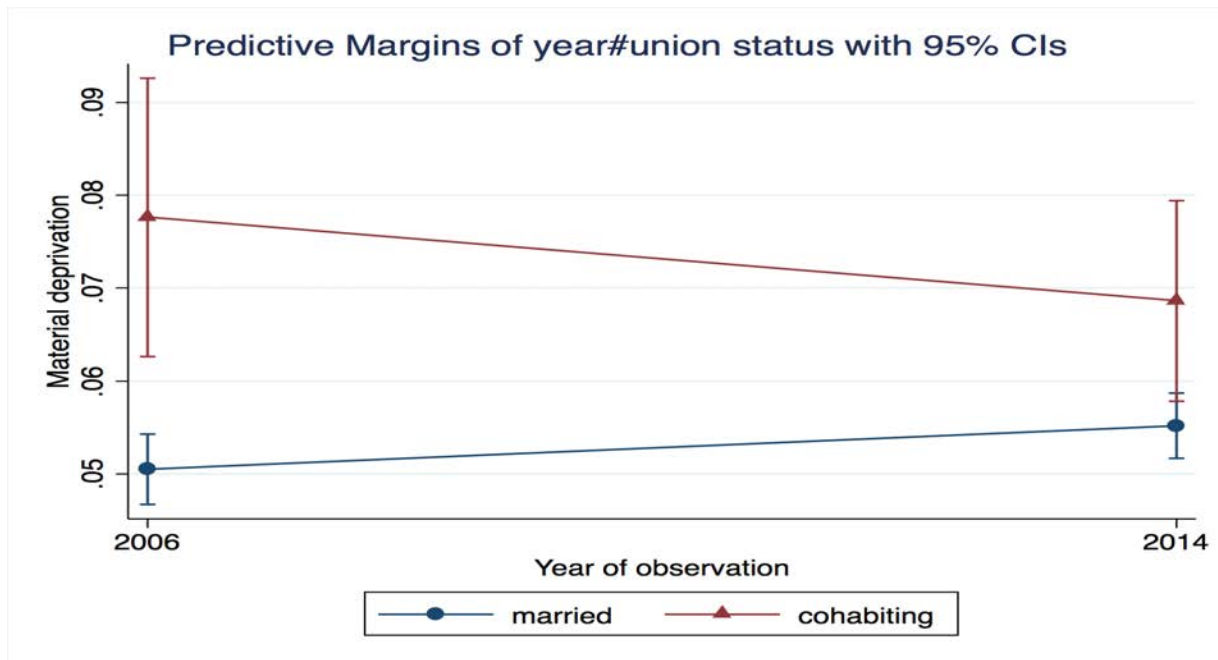
Figure A. 3: Predicted probabilities of children experiencing material deprivation by parental union status and year of observation in Spain (model 3)