

Spatial Mobility of Young Adults

During the Transition to Adulthood in Britain

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Abstract

This paper examines spatial mobility of young adults in England and Wales in the 1990s and the 2000s. We investigate the dynamics of spatial mobility among young people by cohort and gender, controlling for both personal characteristics (such as parental socioeconomic status) and changes in other life domains, such as employment, education and partnership statuses. The study uses the data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and applies the techniques of multistate event history analysis, which consist of the set of competing risks models for repeated events (sequence of long- or short-distance moves). We demonstrate that the youngest cohort leaves the parental home later than the two older cohorts, but once they leave the parental nest, they show a tendency towards higher spatial mobility than the two older cohorts. Our results show that females leave parental home earlier than males. The gender differences in mobility disappear for the higher order of moves. By contrast, the socioeconomic differences in spatial mobility persist across all cohorts; young people from advantaged backgrounds are spatially more mobile than those who come from disadvantaged families.

1. Introduction

Leaving the parental home is traditionally considered to be one of the significant markers of the transition to adulthood, together with first union formation, completing education and entry into the labour market (Billari, 2001; Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Huinink, 2013). The significant structural and socioeconomic changes, which have taken place in Britain during the last decades have affected all domains of life of young people. Previous literature on living arrangements of young adults in Britain describes the changes in household composition, such as the rise in living in shared accommodation and delaying or alternating cohabitation experience through ‘living-apart-together’ relationships (Ermisch & Siedler, 2009; Stone, Berrington, & Falkingham, 2011). Another significant pattern which has recently attracted scholars’ attention is the increasing number of young people who stay longer in the parental home or are forced to move back after graduation (so called ‘boomerangs’) (Stone, Berrington, & Falkingham, 2014). Therefore, there exist a need for research, which would take a holistic life course view on moving trajectories and go beyond a single event perspective – leaving the parental home – as a marker of the transition to adulthood.

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This paper investigates the dynamics of spatial mobility among young people by cohort and gender, controlling for both personal characteristics (such as parental socioeconomic status, region of residence) and changes in other life domains, such as employment, education and partnership histories. Firstly, we test whether the youngest cohort (born in 1985-90) leaves the parental home later than the two older cohorts (1974-79 and 1980-84) and shows reduced mobility throughout the transition to adulthood period. Secondly, we investigate whether females leave the parental home earlier than males and show higher mobility afterwards as well.

This article makes an empirical contribution to the existing literature by bringing the longitudinal and life course perspective to the study of spatial mobility of young people in England and Wales. We move beyond a single event approach, namely, leaving the parental home as a classical marker of the transition to adulthood, and focus on moving trajectories. We conduct an order-specific analysis of factors affecting young people's mobility decisions. Moreover, we investigate moving trajectories in relation to other life course transitions, such as employment, education and partnership histories. The analysis also distinguishes between short- and long-distance moves. Traditionally, short-distance moves are attributed to housing adjustments, whereas long-distance moves are considered to be employment-related (Boyle, Kulu, Cooke, Gayle, & Mulder, 2008; Clark & Huang, 2003; Detang-Dessendre & Molho, 1999; Kulu, 2008; Mulder & Clark, 2000). In our analysis, we treat the decision to move short- or long-distance as competing risks, allowing for the simultaneous reasons and motivation behind the move.

The analysis is conducted on 18 waves of the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), an annual survey consisting of a nationally representative sample of households recruited in 1991. We focus on individuals aged 16 and follow their transitions until the age of 34 or censoring, whichever comes the first. We compare moving trajectories of three birth cohorts: 1974-1979, 1980-1984 and 1985-1990, distinguishing the patterns by the order of moves (first, second, third and higher moves). The decision to move is treated from a competing risk perspective, meaning that each individual chooses whether to move short- or long-distance; this choice is repeated across the whole observation period. Therefore, we apply the multistate event history analysis techniques.

2. Mobility over the early stage of the life course

During the last few decades, socioeconomic and cultural changes, particularly expansion of higher education and professionalisation and feminisation of the labour market, led to increased difficulties in decision-making especially in the early stage of the life course (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Liefbroer, 1999; Mills & Blossfeld, 2003). As the range of alternatives becomes wider it not only causes a problem of which option to choose but also when. As a result, young people prefer to stay longer in education, postpone entry to the labour force and parenthood (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Corijn & Klijzing, 2001).

Simultaneously, these changes have prompted the emergence of a variety of living arrangements and different family trajectories and pathways to social and economic independence (Elzinga & Liefbroer, 2007; Huinink, 2013; Macmillan, 2005).

Young people's migration careers begin once they move out of the parental home. This transition is often treated as an event-marker of the transition to adulthood (Billari, 2004; Billari & Liefbroer, 2010; Huinink, 2013; Liefbroer & Toulemon, 2010; Modell, Furstenberg, & Hershberg, 1976). However, many studies have shown that it is not a rare case that young people move back or 'boomerang' to parental home throughout the early stage of the life course (Da Vanzo & Goldscheider, 1990; Frances Goldscheider, Thornton, & Young-DeMarco, 1993; Jones, 1995; Mitchell, 2009; Mulder & Clark, 2002; Sage, Evandrou, & Falkingham, 2013; Stone et al., 2014). Therefore, the holistic life course approach towards migration careers has become popular in social sciences (Bailey, 2009; Bernard, Bell, & Charles-Edwards, 2014; Clark, 2013; Clark & Huang, 2004; Clark & Huang, 2003; Coulter, Van Ham, & Findlay, 2016; Falkingham, Sage, Stone, & Vlachantoni, 2016; Findlay, McCollum, Coulter, & Gayle, 2015; Mulder & Hooimeijer, 1999; Mulder & Wagner, 1993; Stockdale & Catney, 2014; Tyrrell & Kraftl, 2015). The life course approach suggests that any decision in life, in particular a decision to move or to stay, cannot be seen disconnected from other life domains ('linked lives'), such as education and employment careers, partnership and family histories (Giele & Elder, 1998).

2.1 Leaving the parental home

There exists a large body of literature on 'pathways into independent living', which acknowledges the linkages between leaving the parental home into cohabitation or marriage, work or education (Berrington, 2001; Berrington & Murphy, 1994; De Jong Gierveld, Liefbroer, & Beekink, 1991; Goldscheider et al., 1993; Goldscheider & DaVanzo, 1989; Holdsworth, 2000; Huinink, 2013; Iacovou, 2002; Settersten & Ray, 2010; Shanahan, 2000). The life course approach also takes into account that those decisions are taken under the constraints of welfare provision, housing policies and family financial support (Billari, 2004; Cavalli & Galland, 1995; Cook & Furstenberg, 2002; Corijn & Klijzing, 2001; Dommermuth, 2008; Jones, 1995; Vogel, 2002). The desire to move may be based on both personal preferences, beliefs or aspirations as well as on socially accepted normative timetables for different stages of life careers (Billari & Liefbroer, 2007; Hogan & Astone, 1986; Holdsworth & Morgan, 2005; Marini, 1984; Neugarten, Moore, & Lowe, 1965; Riley, 1987). The research has shown that in particular parental expectations on 'leaving the nest' as well as their willingness and opportunity to support the children in the future have a large effect on timing and destination of the first move (Goldscheider, Thornton, & Yang, 2001; Hochstenbach & Boterman, 2015; Settersten & Ray, 2010; Whittington & Peters, 1996).

The British pattern of the transition to adulthood is usually described as an 'accelerated' one early transition from school to work followed by heterogeneous household and family formation (Bynner, 2001; Cavalli & Galland, 1995). Those transitions vary according to class, gender and ethnicity (Bynner, 2001, 2005; Cavalli & Galland, 1995; Coffield, 1995) with parental socioeconomic resources playing a significant role for the destination and timing of home leaving. Research shows that young people from advantaged backgrounds leave home earlier for reasons other than cohabitation and marriage (Berrington, 2001; Berrington & Murphy, 1994; De Jong Gierveld et al., 1991; Ermisch & Di Salvo, 1997; Furstenberg, 2008; Goldscheider, Hofferth, & Curtin, 2014; Holdsworth, 2000; Kerckhoff & Macrae, 1992).

Leaving the parental home for educational reasons is seen as an important step towards adulthood and independence especially among young adults whose parents obtained higher education (De Jong Gierveld et al., 1991; Holdsworth, 2004; Patiniotis & Holdsworth, 2005). Although for the others, the decision to temporarily stay at home might be as well a result of protective behaviour: "young people from backgrounds where routes to adulthood traditionally lie in leaving school and finding work may prefer the emotional security of remaining close to family and friends while participating in the unfamiliar world of higher education" (Patiniotis & Holdsworth, 2005, p.82).

There exist as well a group of other predictors of home leaving, which affect young people's choices of when and where to move out, such as personal values, preferences and resources (Da Vanzo & Goldscheider, 1990; Iacovou, 2010). Public image of the destination of move may also influence the choice of future residence (Duncan & Smith, 2006; Smith & Jöns, 2015).

2.2 Further moves

2.2.1 Mobility 'triggers' and housing adjustments

From the life course perspective moves can be initiated by a number of various so-called event-'triggers', such as changes in occupation, relationships, family extension and dissolution (Clark, 2013; Clark & Huang, 2004; Clark & Whilters, 2007; Falkingham et al., 2016; Mulder & Hooimeijer, 1999). Clark (2013) draws a general conclusion suitable for explanation of all types of moves as "whether it is an employment opportunity or the opportunity to bring housing consumption into balance with housing needs, migration and mobility are the adjustment processes which allow individuals and households to bring their location into equilibrium with their perceived needs for specific quantities of housing and access to services and facilities" (p. 320).

Among young people who just finished their education regardless of the qualification, finding a job becomes a priority. Therefore, change in economic activity status acts as an important 'trigger' for mobility of young people. Following the expansion of higher education in Britain, a lot of research has been conducted on education-related migrations, underlying the increasing role of urban centres,

studentification and the emergence of ‘escalator region’ in the South East of England, which attracts young people both for education and employment reasons (Faggian & McCann, 2009; Fielding, 1992; Smith & Holt, 2007; Smith & Sage, 2014). Böheim and Taylor (1999) have also shown that unemployed people are more likely to move between the regions than employed individuals, supporting therefore the economic rationality behind the moves.

Family changes represent another big group of mobility ‘triggers’. Extensive research has focused on the effects of single events on mobility, such as entering cohabitation or marriage (Mulder & Wagner, 1993; Clark & Huang, 2003), divorce or union dissolution (Feijten & Van Ham, 2008; Mulder & Wagner, 2010), childbirth (Kulu, 2008; Kulu & Milewski, 2008; Michielin & Mulder, 2008) as well on the synchronicity of mobility, employment and family trajectories (Clark & Withers, 2009; Courgeau, 1985). Family changes often require adjusting the housing for the needs of the family. Therefore, the family extension or its anticipation have a direct impact on mobility (Kulu & Steele, 2013; Mulder, 2013). Rabe and Taylor (2010) found that subjective and objective neighbourhood qualities effect dramatically the residential mobility. Specifically for the UK context, family migrations motivated by the proximity to the ‘right school’ (predominantly among middle class families) have received special attention (Butler, Hamnett, Ramsden, & Webber, 2007; Smith & Jöns, 2015).

The link between the ‘mobility triggers’ or housing adjustment and the actual moving in London has received special attention among scholars, considering the long standing tradition of comparing the capital to the rest of the country. High prices and tight housing market are an obstacle for young people intending to change their living arrangements, including leaving the parental home. As Clark and Huang (2003) pointed out “the desire to move, as indicated by room stress and changes in household composition, may be difficult to fulfil” (p. 334). The general postponement of marriage and childbearing in London (Kulu & Washbrook, 2014) with a large proportion of young singles living in shared housing might be a reason for the lower residential mobility as well.

2.2.2 Short- and long-distance moves

In migration research, there exist a long tradition of distinguishing between short- and long-distance moves, considering the former driven by housing adjustments and the latter by changes in employment. However, recent research has shown that such distinction cannot fully account for the complexity of the moving decision, given the increased diversity in life course trajectories, family structure and living arrangements (Clark & Whithers, 2007; Smith & Finney, 2015). By using the stated reasons for geographic mobility, research for the UK, US and Nordic countries has found that a large share of long-distance moves cannot be entirely attributed to employment reasons (Clark & Huang, 2004; Clark & Whithers, 2007; Clark & Maas, 2012; Coulter & Scott, 2015; Geist & McManus, 2012; Lundholm, Garvill, Malmberg, & Westin, 2004). The broad category of non-economic reasons stated by the respondents included for instance

'quality of life' (Geist & McManus, 2012) and 'environmental and social factors' (Lundholm et al., 2004; Niedomysl, 2011).

Research on young adults' complex transitions and changing values further supports the idea of thinking beyond the straightforward connection between the economic rationality and short- and long-distance moves. Research on 'studentification' and 'gentrification' (Smith & Holt, 2007; Hochstenbach & Boterman, 2015) together with the acknowledgment of the importance of the city branding (e.g. Brighton and Manchester seen as LGBT friendly places as mentioned by Duncan and Smith (2006)) makes a significant contribution to our understanding of young people's mobility, suggesting that some moves could be motivated by the search of self-identification and further personal development. Moreover, the variety of living arrangements among young people, particularly the increased number of shared housing² (Berrington & Stone, 2014), encourages to look into non-economic aspects of this social process and its possible influence on residential mobility. Heath and Clever (2003) found that young people's experiences of shared housing have changed the meaning of home and increased the importance of housemates in the lives of sharers. However, to our knowledge no research has been conducted to investigate the link between the HMO culture and its impact on residential mobility.

Among other factors affecting migration decisions, research on proximity of peers and relatives has shown that closeness to parents is an important predictor of further movements (De Jong, 1991; Michielin, Mulder & Zorlu, 2008). Sage, Evandrou & Falkingham (2013) demonstrated that subjective well-being and 'parental safety net' play a significant role in explaining migration decisions in the UK after graduate studies. Nowok et al. (2013) addressed another puzzling issue of migrants' happiness and the consequences of migration using the BHPS sample, showing that in most cases subjective-wellbeing before the move is lower than after the move, therefore, suggesting this aspect might bring a meaningful addition to the life course perspective on migration in the future. The concept of 'lifestyle migration' (Walford & Stockdale, 2015) and the 'new mobility paradigm' (Sheller & Urry, 2006) have proposed further meaning of movements as an active practice rather than as the goal-oriented adjustment process and therefore might be seen as an alternative explanation for young people's movements.

2.3 Gender differences

In Britain, with a long tradition of academic interest in gender differences in migration, the first evidence of females moving more often than males was found as early as in 1885 by Ravenstein. One of the main drives of females' migration behaviour is traditionally considered to be family formation. On average females enter cohabitation or marriage earlier than males, which for a long time was the single major factor explaining the gender gap in timing of leaving the parental home (Berrington, 2001; Berrington &

² Also referred as Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) by the Housing act of 1985 and 2004 (Wilson, 2013)

Murphy, 1994). Research on West Germany and France has found that migrations (including the first move) related to entry into marriage are more often short-distance moves (Detang-Dessendre & Molho, 2000; Mulder & Wagner, 1993). Family migration studies usually distinguish between 'tied stayers' and 'tied movers' who are in most cases females following their partners to the location of their new job. This often has negative consequences on their careers (Boyle, Cooke, Halfacree, & Smith, 2001; Cooke, 2001, 2003; Smits, Mulder, & Hooimeijer, 2003).

Taking into account that our sample contains young people who began their transitions to adulthood at the age of 16 in 1991, the changing nature of gender-specific education and employment careers in Britain needs to be taken into consideration. In 1992, females' participation rates in higher education caught up with those of men for the first time since universities started accepting female students. The participation rate has increased ever since, creating a reverse gender gap (Broecke & Hamed, 2008), and therefore promoting the shift in pathways of leaving the parental home among females towards educational reasons. Furthermore, considering the professionalisation and feminisation of labour market, Fielding and Halford (1993) found evidence that higher mobility among women is associated with moves between labour markets and may also lead or be determined by the upward social mobility. Boyle and Halfacree (1995) also found evidence of higher mobility among some groups of women among service class, which is mainly attributed to increase in women's career aspirations. Investigating the patterns in post-studies migration, Faggian et al. (2007) came to the conclusion that "women use migration as a means of partially compensating for gender differences in the ease of accessing labour markets" (p. 538). Taking into account the described changes in the nature of the labour market and access to higher education, research on mobility of dual career households makes an important contribution to the gender migration literature. For instance, in the US dual careers households tend to move less due to the complex nexus of career-family decisions (Bailey, Blake, & Cooke, 2004; Clark & Withers, 2009).

2.4 Institutional background in Britain

By taking a life course approach it is necessary to take into account institutional background and constraints, within which generations of young adults were taking their life decisions. Traditional preferences to choose work over further education are stimulated by the open and flexible labour market relationships in Britain. Due to the shift from manufacturing to a service economy in the late 70s and the following decline in demand for low skilled workers young people were confronted with a need of further training before applying for the job, which resulted in the expansion of further and higher education. Although, the expansion of education is usually associated with the investment in human capital which has a positive effect on the economy, on the contrary, in Britain it led to the "growing polarization between the advantaged and the disadvantaged", leaving unqualified and unskilled workers with the

prospect of 'patchwork careers' (Bynner, 2005, p. 377) and forcing highly educated to move to more attractive labour market areas, e.g. 'escalator regions' as a result of qualification mismatch on the labour market. The introduction of tuition fees in 1998 and its subsequent raise has increased student debt and implicitly stimulated multiple role occupation, such as working part-time to support education.

Significant changes happened in the other life course domains as well. Thus, during the recent decades the standardised pattern of forming a first union, which subsequently led to marriage and new family formation, was affected by the spread of cohabitation and 'living-apart-together' relationships among the young adults (Ermisch & Sielder, 2008). Moreover, the neoliberal welfare system which implies the residual family regime or so called 'laissez-faire approach' where the most deprived socio-economic groups are being supported by the state, resulted in British fertility becoming 'educationally and socially polarized' (Ekert-Jaffe, Joshi, Lynch, Mougin, & Rendall, 2002). The latter is characterized by high 'concentration ratios': Higher fertility rates among most disadvantaged (incl. teenage pregnancy) on the one hand, and postponement of childbearing with eventual higher rates of childlessness amongst most advantaged on the other.

As for the housing domain, the main changes were triggered by the shift to a neoliberal welfare regime under Margaret Thatcher's Government and subsequent housing crisis. As a result of the declining affordability of housing, residualisation of social housing sector and increased rental prices many young people tend to stay in their parental home longer or being forced to move back after graduation (so called 'boomerangs'), finding themselves in the in-between state of being not in education and not in employment (NEET) (Stone, Berrington, & Falkingham, 2011).

2.5 Summary and hypotheses

To sum up, any decision to move might be motivated by two group of factors. The first group includes life course events, such as changes in occupation, relationships, family extension and dissolution. The second group includes reasons, which are harder to quantify, such as housing adjustment, neighbourhood preferences, importance of proximity of friends and parents, environmental factors and search for a better quality of life.

In regards to moving trajectories of young people in Britain, it can be argued that changes in other life course domains could have spoken both in favour of increased and decreased mobility across the cohorts of interest. On the one hand, the expansion of further and higher education triggered the higher rates of leaving the parental home. Moreover, professionalisation of the labour market also forced young adults to move to more attractive labour market areas, e.g. 'escalator regions'. Increase in cohabitation could also work as a mobility 'trigger', both through moves adjusting the housing needs of a couple as well through increased mobility of separated people.

On the other hand, unaffordability of housing, tuition fees and economic hardship could be an obstacle on the way of gaining independence for some groups of young adults, therefore forcing them to stay longer in the parental home. The increase of dual career households and LAT relationships could also simultaneously lead to the decrease in 'tied' female migration and postponement of family formation under one roof, i.e. contributing to the argument of decreased mobility.

Therefore, we aim to analyse the individual residential histories of young people in relation to other life course domains and gain a holistic picture of changes in mobility by gender and across cohorts.

Our hypotheses are as follows:

First, we expect to observe the postponement of leaving parental home among the youngest cohort. Yet, we do not expect lower overall residential mobility among this cohort.

Second, we expect females to show higher spatial mobility than males throughout the whole period. We expect males' moves to be more often long- than short- distance.

Third, we expect people from more advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds to leave parental home earlier than those who come from disadvantaged families.

Fourth, we expect young people growing up in London to leave parental home later and show higher spatial mobility later than those living outside of London.

Finally, we expect changes in other life course domains to explain some of the cohort and gender differences in mobility levels. However, an interesting question is how much variation in spatial mobility across birth cohorts is left after accounting for changes in other life domains.

3. Data, variables and method

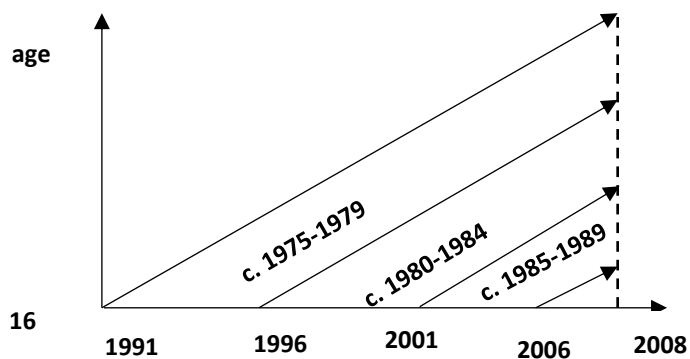
3.1 Sample

We used data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). The BHPS is an annual survey consisting of a nationally representative sample of about 5,500 households recruited in 1991, containing a total of approximately 10,000 individuals. The BHPS provides a good opportunity to investigate the life trajectories of young people. It contains detailed annual information about educational and employment changes, union formation and dissolution, birth of children, and residential and housing changes. The place of residence is recoded at each panel wave. Respondents are also asked to provide the exact date of move. However, short-term temporary changes in living arrangements between the waves cannot be identified. For the analysis we have chosen the medium-level geographical identifiers and, therefore, use the local authority districts (LAD) data. LAD is a generic term used to cover London boroughs, metropolitan districts, unitary authorities and non-metropolitan districts in England; unitary authorities in Wales; council areas in Scotland; and district council areas in Northern Ireland (ONS 2016).

Because information on the moves was not collected retrospectively, we followed only persons who reach the age of 16 between 1991 and 2006 in England and Wales. Only respondents present at least at two consecutive waves were included.

The final sample contains 2,562 individuals with 236,527 person-months of data from three birth cohorts: 1974-1979, 1980-1984 and 1985-1990, observed over the period 1991-2008. We observed individuals from the moment they turned 16 and followed them until the last date of the interview for the wave 18, unless they were lost to follow up earlier on. As discussed in Stone et al. (2014) calculating panel attrition for this kind of samples is not straightforward. Therefore, we calculated the 5-wave participation rates for all cohorts as a proportion of persons followed up for 5 waves or more (not necessarily subsequently). According to this approach, 90% of representatives of the oldest cohort on average participated at least in 5 waves (71% on average are followed for 10 or more waves); 83% of the middle cohort (67% on average are followed for 8 or more waves); and 80% of the youngest cohort (of those who participated only in 4 waves 84% are followed for the entire range; of those who were followed for 3 years 7% dropped out after 2 waves). Although, the panel attrition should not bias the estimations, the data set has a few other limitations, i.e. temporary migration out of Britain ('gap year' or exchange studies abroad, including a move to Northern Ireland) was coded in the same way as a missing wave due to other reasons. Figure 1 represents the sample by means of the classical Lexis diagram.

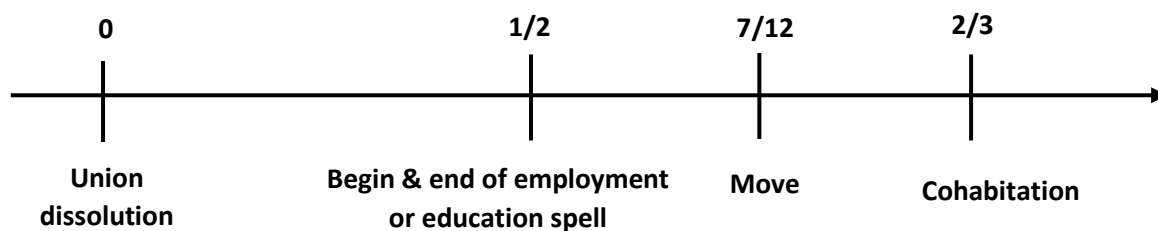
Figure 1. Sample representation on Lexis diagram



Source: Own representation based on the BHPS, waves 1-18

We had to address the issue of missing month for some events; to minimise the error we assumed events with missing month to happen in July. The simultaneous life events are ordered in the following way (see Figure 2): union dissolution (beginning of the month - 0) – change in employment and education spell (middle of the month - 1/2) – move (7/12 of the month) – cohabitation (2/3 of the month). The sensitivity analysis showed that coefficients for the order and type of move, cohort, gender, parental SES and geography proxy did not change regardless whether we had assigned the move to 1/3, 7/12 or 7/8 of the month.

Figure 2. Order of the life events happening in the same month



Source: Own representation based on the BHPS, waves 1-18

3.2 Variables

Type of move

We distinguished between two types of moves, namely short- and long-distance moves. Traditionally, researchers approach this question in two different ways. The first method involves using the distance of move measured in kilometres, and defining a move more than 50km as long-distance (Boyle, 1995; Boyle et al., 2001; Champion & Shuttleworth, 2015; Clark & Huang, 2004). Another way is to use labour market areas to distinguish between moves within and between labour market areas as short- and long-distance moves, accordingly (Clark & Huang, 2003; Kulu & Washbrook, 2014).

In this study, the move is considered to be short-distance if it occurred within a labour market area (LMA), and long-distance if it involved moving to a different LMA. A local authority area is assigned to an urban centre if at least 15% of its employed population commuted there in 2001. The areas were created by using 2001 Census commuting flow data.³ Our proportional sample covers information from 218 labour market areas in Britain, with London region being made up of 33 smaller local districts. The ways of defining urban thresholds is widely discussed in literature (Coombes, 2000; Hugo, Champion, & Lattes, 2003). Kulu and Washbrook (2014) have shown minor regional variations in fertility levels by applying 15%, 20% and 30% thresholds.

Order of move

By taking a life course approach, we distinguished between 1st move (leaving parental home), 2nd and higher order moves (3rd+).

Educational level

Educational level is one of the key explanatory variables in the analysis of young people's mobility. The minimum school-leaving age in Great Britain for all individuals in our sample was 16 years. Since this is the age at which we started following the respondents, we have the complete information on their educational histories. The variable is based on the self-reported question about the highest qualification

³ The current ONS criteria for defining TTWAs is that generally at least 75% of an area's resident workforce work in the area and at least 75% of the people who work in the area also live in the area.

degree obtained at the moment of interview and is therefore time-varying. We specified 3 levels for this time-varying covariate: (1) bachelor's degree or higher (combined from "Higher Degree" and "1st Degree" categories); (2) post-compulsory education (combined from "Higher National Certificate (HNC) of Diploma (HND)", "Teaching qualifications" and other professional certificates); (3) school education.

Partnership status

Partnership status is another key time-varying explanatory variable used in the analysis. The dataset for family histories is available from the UK Data Archive and contains information on partnership coming both from the panel and from the marital and union histories which were collected additionally in waves 2, 11 and 12, respectively (Pronzato, 2010). Therefore, it allowed us to use the complete partnership histories (up to 10 unions) of respondents throughout their transition to adulthood in the analysis.

Additional Control Variables

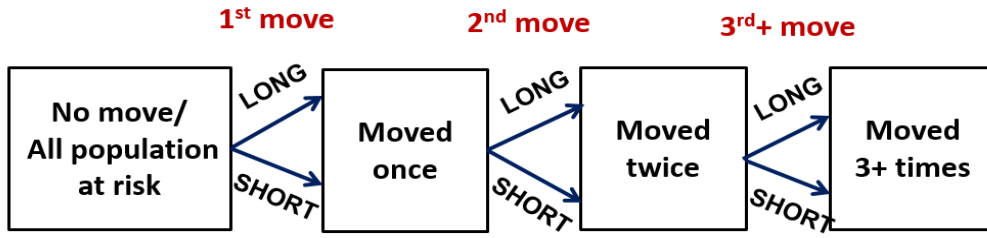
We additionally controlled for the time-varying economic activity status which included categories: (1) working full-time; (2) working part-time; (3) full-time students; (4) unemployed; (5) others or missing. Parental occupational class was used to control for the socioeconomic differences. The panel contains information on respondent's mother's and father's occupational status, which is available from the household grid. We used data from the wave where respondents turned 16 and therefore and treated the variable as a fixed covariate. The missing cases were replaced with the information from any wave closest to the one where respondent turned 16. The priority was given to the information about the father's status. The categories were coded using the Goldthorpe social class schema (Goldthorpe, 1983; Goldthorpe, Llewellyn, & Payne, 1980). We conducted a sensitivity analysis of including in the model different residential contexts, either an urban-rural indicator, six types of areas based on population density (London, large or medium city, high or medium density towns and combined rural and low density towns category) or London vs the rest dummy. The analysis showed that that the explanatory power of the model improved the most after including the combined variable with three categories: 1) London, 2) other urban, 3) low density towns and rural.

Table 1 in the Appendix contains information on occurrence and exposure by all covariates.

3.3 Method

We used multistate event history analysis to examine spatial mobility of young adults. The method has proved to be a powerful tool for investigating complex moving trajectories (Mulder & Clark, 2000; Kulu, 2008). Figure 3 illustrates the basic setup for the model.

Figure 3. Repeated competing risks for the short- and long-distance moves



Source: Own representation based on the BHPS, waves 1-18

Each individual in the sample is under the risk of moving for the first time. Moves are treated as repeated events and we distinguish between short- and long-distance moves by means of adding a competing risk element to the models. We also specify the piecewise constant exponential model, based on the set of proportional hazards model with the assumption of constant baseline hazard for each of the cutpoint time intervals⁴.

The model therefore can be formalised as follows:

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

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

Where $\mu_{im}^{SD}(t)$ and $\mu_{im}^{LD}(t)$ denote the risk of m th short(SD)- and long(LD)-distance moves for individual i , $y(t)$ denotes a piecewise constant age baseline (age or time since previous move for second and higher order events), x_k represents a value of a time-constant variable and $w_j(t)$ represents a time-varying variable. Since residential episodes are nested within individuals, an individual error term ε_i was added to the equation to control for the clustering effects and to account for the unobserved determinants of residential mobility (Cleves, Gutierrez, William, & Marchenko, 2010; Putter, Fiocco, & Geskus, 2007).

4. Results

First we looked into occurrence and exposure frequencies among all cohorts. Table 2 provides relevant information on hazard rates by order of moves. 50% of respondents in our sample have left home by age 22 (~21.8). A half of those who left home moved for the second time within 2 years (~1.9).

⁴ The cutpoint intervals were selected based on the first moves age-specific and second moves time since the first move-specific hazard rates – 24, 60, 96 and 132 months.

Table 2. Occurrence & Exposure table by order of moves

Move order	person-months	failures	rate	Survival time			
				25%	50%	75%	
1st move	145301.72	1358	0.009	19.3	21.8	26	(age in years)
2nd move	35302.15	900	0.025	1	1.9	4.2	(time since the
3rd+moves	55923.13	1470	0.026				1 st move)
Total	236527	3728	0.016				

Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

Table 3 gives an overview on the median age at first move by cohort and gender. The median age of leaving parental home among the youngest cohort is approximately one year higher than for the other two cohorts (22,5 years against 21,4 and 21,6 for cohorts 1974-1979 and 1980-1984 respectively). The question arises as to whether this is an effect of a general postponement of moves or is it a marker of reduced mobility (or eventually both).

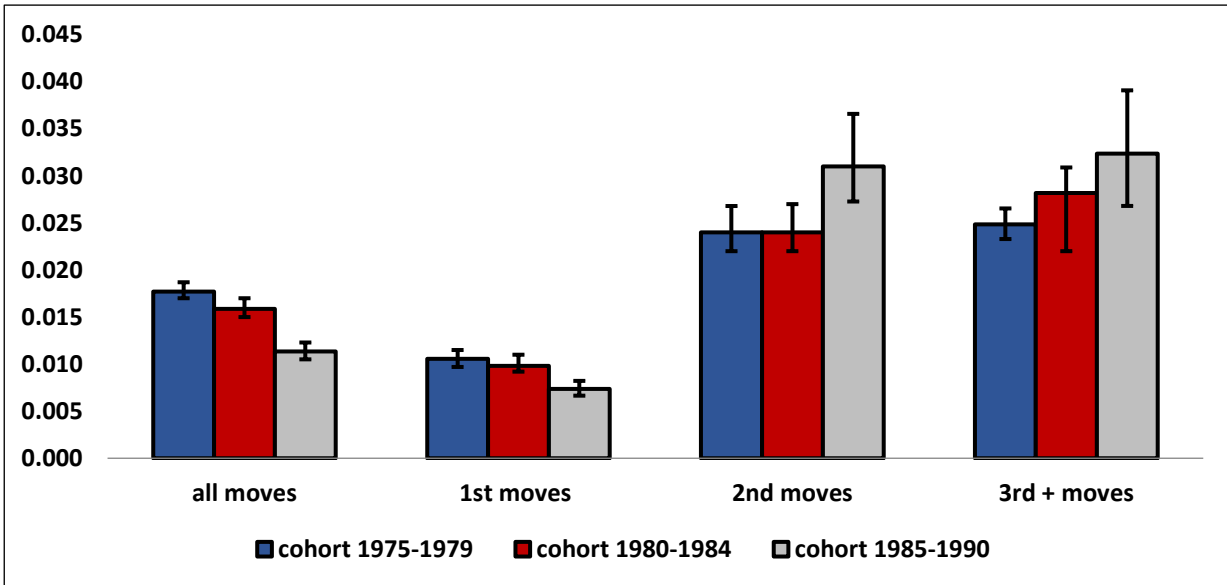
Table 3. Median age at first move by cohort and gender

cohort	gender	age	Median age for	Gender gap
			both genders	
1974-1979	females	20.9	21.4	1.2
	males	22.1		
1980-1984	females	20.8	21.6	2.1
	males	22.9		
1985-1990	females	21.3	22.5	2
	males	23.3		
Overall	females	20.9	21.8	1.9
	males	22.8		

Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

Figures 1a speaks in favour of the postponement of moves and reduced mobility among the youngest cohort. It, however, suggests that residential mobility among those who left home from the youngest cohort tends to be higher than among two other cohorts, once they move out of the parental home (considering that the events of highest order of move are censored for the youngest cohort).

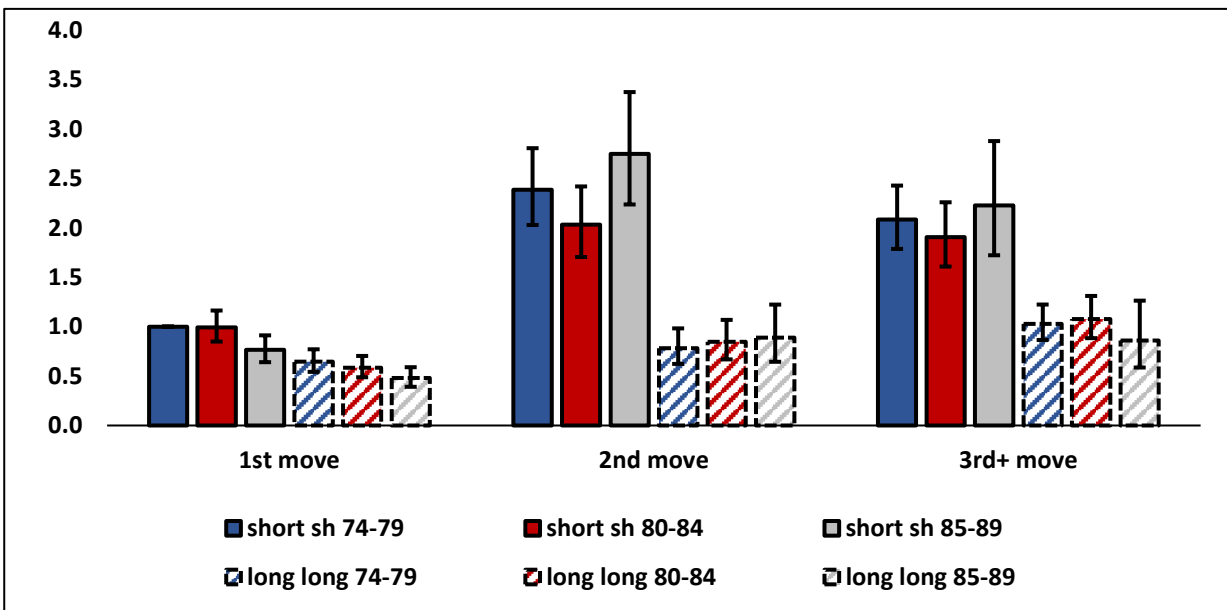
Figure 1a. Hazard rates for all moves by cohort and order of move



Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

Figure 1b provides an overview of the distribution of hazard rates of short- and long-distance moves. Young adults from all three cohorts are more likely to move short than long distance, supporting findings of other migration researchers. However, among the first moves the differences in mobility intensity are the smallest, suggesting the increasing numbers of long-distance home-leavers for educational reasons. A tendency (although not statistically significant) towards higher order mobility among the youngest cohort can be attributed mostly to short-distance moves, which are traditionally associated with residential mobility.

Figure 1b. Interaction effect by order and type of move * cohort

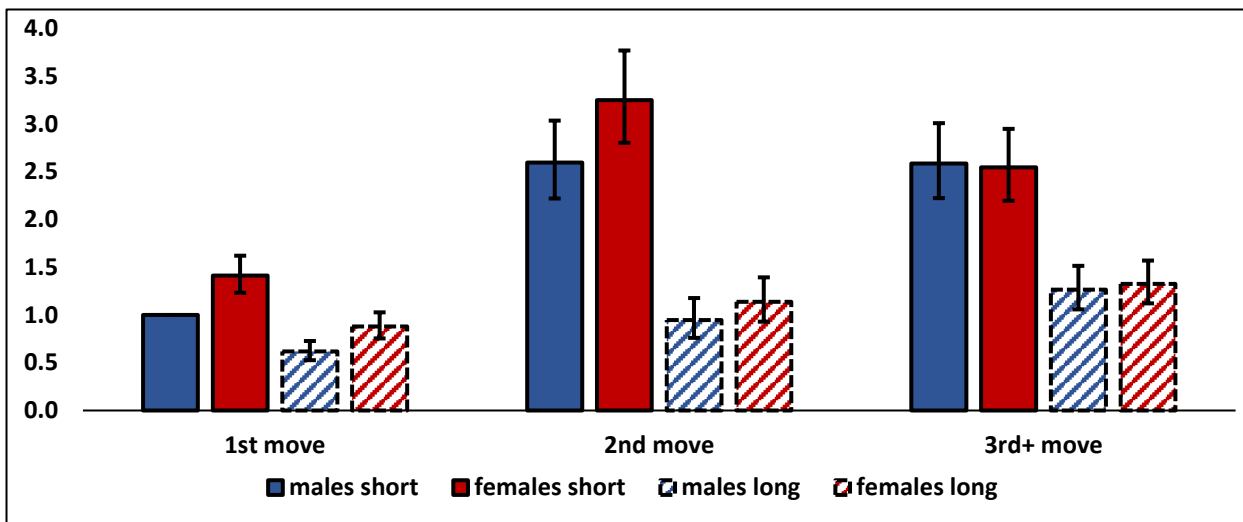


Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

Note: The model is controlled for gender, partnership and economic activity status, parental SES, education level, residential context

Figure 2 shows the intensity of moves throughout the early stage of the life course separately for males and females. Females move out of the parental home earlier than males, both for short and long distances. Together with the general postponement of first moves, the gender gap increased from 1.2 to 2.1 years between the cohorts 1974-1979 and 1980-1984 (Table 3). The majority of moves regardless of order are short-distance among both males and females. By the higher order of moves gender differences among all cohorts become less pronounced (not statistically significant) and disappear eventually.

Figure 2. Interaction effect by order and type of move * gender



Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

Note: The model is controlled for cohort, partnership and economic activity status, parental SES, education level, residential context

Table 4 contains information on all covariates in the basic multistate model for short- and long-distance repeated moves. According to our findings, young people from more advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds leave the parental home earlier than their counterparts. The effect persists among all cohorts. Young people from the two older cohorts who were living in London at age 16 left the parental home later than their counterparts outside of London. By the higher order of moves the differences between London and the rest of the country became less pronounced for all cohorts. The youngest cohort did not show any differences already in first moves.

We fitted two blocks of models with three-way interaction effect between either cohort or gender and order and type of move (short- or long-distance) to investigate in more detail the effects of changes in other life course domains on young people's mobility. The first set of models (Table 4 and Table 5 in Appendix) summarizes the results of standardisation for the cohort and order of move interactions for short- and long-distance moves respectively (males moving first time have been chosen as a reference category in the model). The second set of models (Table 6 and Table 7 in the Appendix) addresses the same questions for gender differences.

Table 4. Hazard ratios for all moves

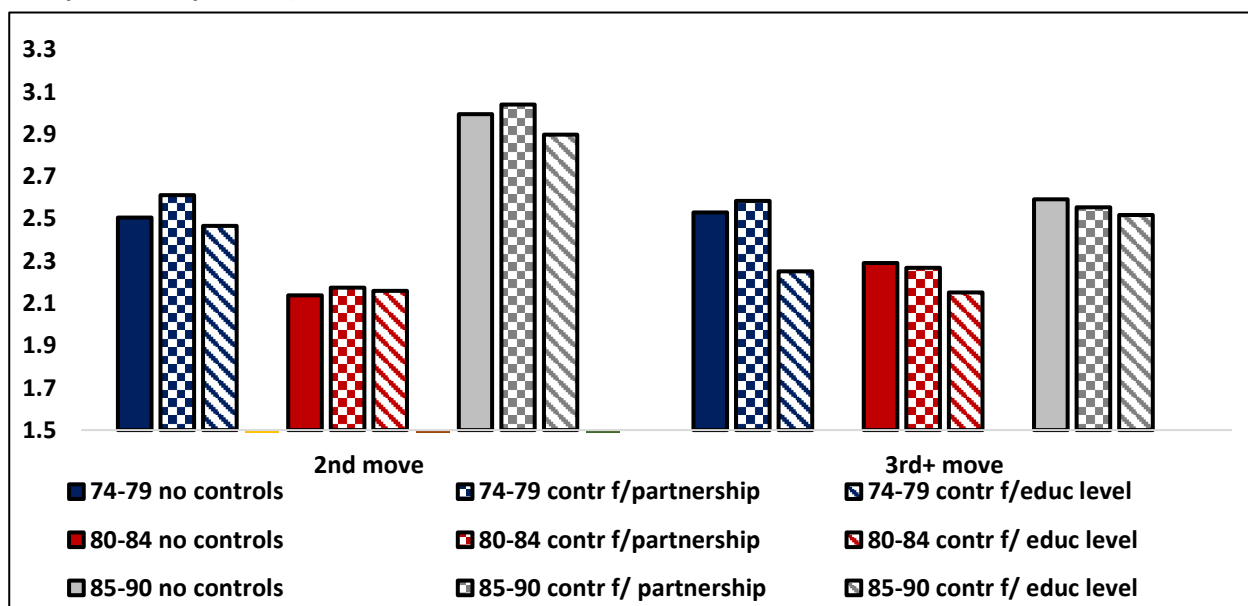
Variables	Hazard Ratio	Robust standard errors	Sig	95% CI	
Cutpoints (months)					
24	0.002	0.0002	***	0.0013	0.0020
60	0.005	0.0004	***	0.0042	0.0059
96	0.005	0.0004	***	0.0040	0.0057
132	0.004	0.0004	***	0.0032	0.0046
>132	0.003	0.0003	***	0.0024	0.0035
Order of move					
1 st move	1				
2 nd move	2.05	0.092	***	1.87	2.24
3+ move	1.98	0.099	***	1.79	2.18
Sex					
Males	1				
Females	1.20	0.042	***	1.12	1.29
Cohort					
1974-1979	1				
1980-1984	0.94	0.036		0.87	1.01
1985-1990	0.88	0.046	*	0.79	0.97
Parental occupational class (Golthorpe class scheme)					
Service class	1				
Intermediate class	0.87	0.038	**	0.80	0.95
Working class	0.93	0.043		0.85	1.02
Missing	0.92	0.061		0.81	1.05
Partnership status					
Single	1				
Cohabiting	0.98	0.054		0.88	1.09
Married	0.81	0.064	**	0.69	0.94
Separated	1.51	0.106	***	1.31	1.73
Educational level					
School education	1				
Post-compulsory education	1.36	0.055	***	1.26	1.47
Bachelor's degree or higher	1.85	0.108	***	1.66	2.08
Economic Activity Status					
Full-time employed	1				
Part-time employed	0.81	0.051	**	0.71	0.91
Full-time student	1.13	0.051	**	1.04	1.24
Unemployed	1.24	0.076	**	1.10	1.40
Others/Missing	0.91	0.056		0.80	1.02
Residential context					
London	1				
Other urban	1.31	0.069	***	1.23	1.5
Small towns, rural, Scotland	1.36	0.071	***	1.23	1.5
Type of move					
Short-distance	1				
Long-distance	0.51	0.021	***	0.47	0.55

Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

Figure 3 shows the results for the standardisation of 2nd and 3rd+ short-distance moves by educational level and partnership status⁵. Considering we follow the respondents since the age of 16, when they live in their parental home, single, with completed or almost completed school degree, including the education and partnership time-varying covariates into the model would account for both – the influence of status change (event-‘trigger’) as well as the long-term status occupation effects. For instance, moves due to the change of educational level to ‘degree’ (finishing education and moving) as well as moves of highly educated persons will appear in the model under the same category. Although, we believe this technical issue should not bias our interpretation of the cohort differences after standardisation. The main conclusion that can be driven after analysing the interaction term is that the coefficients only slightly change after controlling for time-varying covariates and therefore only some of the cohort differences in mobility can be explained by the changes in other life course domains.

Gender differences in first moves persist after we control for all covariates for both types of moves, which suggests that they are significant across all three cohorts and are not related to changes in other life course domains. Figure 4 shows only the effects of partnership status and educational level on 2nd and 3rd+ short-distance moves. Gender differences in 2nd moves became slightly bigger after controlling for partnership status, but it almost did not have any impact on 3rd+ moves. After controlling for educational level, the coefficients for both genders grew smaller and became insignificant once all covariates were taken into account. Both cohort and gender differences in long-distance moves showed almost no fluctuations after controlling for all covariates.

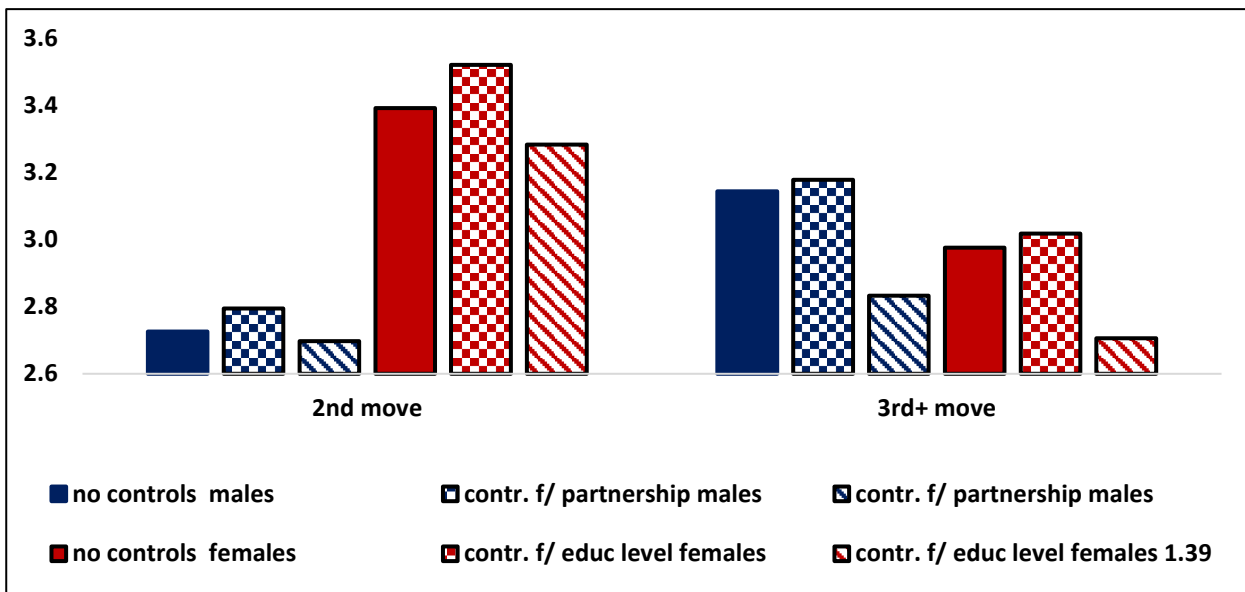
Figure 3. Standardised cohort differences in 2nd and 3+ short-distance moves (by educational level and partnership status)



Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

⁵ The coefficients for first moves showed almost none change after standardising for time-varying covariates, suggesting cohort differences persist after controlling for various ‘mobility triggers’ life events.

Figure 4. Standardised gender differences in 2nd and 3rd+ short-distance moves (by educational level and partnership status)



Source: BHPS waves 1-18; own calculations

Conclusion and discussion

In this paper we conducted a longitudinal analysis of order-specific moves of young people in Britain during the transition to adulthood. Considering the generally similar age profile of short- and long-distance moves of young people (Bernard et al., 2016) and the increased complexity and individualisation of the life course we treated the choice between the distant of move from the competing risks perspective. We looked in detail into cohort and gender differences in mobility patterns among young adults after they turned 16. The analysis is performed by applying the techniques of multistate event history analysis to 18 waves of the BHPS data.

The results confirmed further postponement of leaving the parental home among the youngest cohort by approximately a year compared to the older cohorts. Young adults from more advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds leave the parental nest earlier among all cohorts. Some of the cohort changes in mobility can be explained by the expansion of higher education and spread of cohabitation. However, the tendency towards higher intensity of 2nd and 3rd+ moves among the youngest cohort followed by the general decline in mobility might speak in favour of the growing polarization between the ‘stayers’ (those who prolong staying in the parental home) and the ‘movers’ (those who moved out and show relatively high mobility rate). Further research is needed to figure out to what extent the polarization is driven by the increased economic precarity among young people driven by the introduction of tuition fees, lower level of labour market security and limited affordability of housing. Or can it be a

sign of establishment of the new 'social norm' in mobility linked to the 'age of migration' and transformed cultural meaning of shared housing?

Our second research question looked into gender differences in mobility among young people. The results confirmed that females leave the parental home earlier than males among all cohorts. The time lag between the first moves for males and females increased on average from 1,2 to 2,1 years for the cohorts 1980-1984 and 1985-1990. It might be advocated that some of those gender differences are due to the females's earlier entry into partnership. After controlling for the partnership status and education level, gender differences in 1st moves still persist, yet they disappear by the higher order of moves. The latter poses further questions, whether this is more an effect of self-selection among movers both for males and females or is it an evidence of the converging pattern in the early life course transitions among genders.

The study has a few limitations, such as early censoring of events for the youngest cohort due to the 18-waves design of the BHPS. The sample for ethnic minorities was as well too small to distinguish between any specific subgroups. The migration histories were collected annually and contain information only regarding the moves to the most recent place of residence, ignoring the opportunity of multiple moves throughout the year, which could be particularly crucial for studying the mobility of young people. Therefore, further research using combined individual histories, e.g. Understanding Society, could bring new insights on mobility of young people in Britain.

To sum up, this study shows both the importance of implementing the life course approach into migration research as well as acknowledging a significant role of moving trajectories during the complex period of the transition to adulthood.

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Appendix

Table 1. Person-months at risk and number of events by covariates

Covariate	Risk-time	%	Events	%
Order of move				
1 st move	145301.72	61.4	1358	36.4
2 nd move	35302.15	14.9	900	24.1
3+ move	55923.13	23.6	1470	23.6
Type of move				
Short-distance			2464	66.1
Long-distance			1245	33.4
Missing information			19	0.5
Cohort				
1974-1979	102841	43.5	1834	49.2
1980-1984	78225	33.1	1264	33.9
1985-1990	55461	23.4	630	16.9
Sex				
Male	120609	51	1669	44.8
Female	115918	49	2059	55.2
Parental occupational class (Golthorpe class scheme)				
Service class	88259	37.3	1642	44
Intermediate class	67300	28.5	924	24.8
Working class	59887	25.3	850	22.8
Missings	21081	8.9	312	8.4
Educational level				
Bachelor's degree or higher	20536	8.7	651	17.5
Post-compulsory education	69133	29.2	1476	39.6
School education	146858	62.1	1601	42.9
Partnership status				
Single	186532.3	78.9	2579	69.2
Cohabiting	26357.526	11.1	576	15.5
Married	14315.347	6.1	238	6.4
Separated	9321.827	3.9	335	9
Economic Activity Status				
Full-time employed	97919	41.4	1785	47.9
Part-time employed	17681	7.5	240	6.4
Full-time student	75649	32	1035	27.8
Unemployed	17292	7.3	327	8.8
Others/Missings	27986	11.8	341	9.1
Residential context				
London	32541.749	13.7	429	11.51
Other urban	95011.084	40.2	1537	41.23
Small towns, rural, Scotland	108974.17	46.1	1762	47.26
Total	236527	100	3728	100

Source: Own calculations based on the BHPS, waves 1-18.

Table 5. Short-distance moves standardisation. Cohort * type of move * order of move interaction

Cohort	no controls			c. for gender			c. for partnership			c. for economic activity status			controlled for educational level		
	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90
1st move		0.99	0.81		0.99	0.80		0.99	0.81		0.99	0.80		1.01	0.79
2nd move	2.51	2.14	2.99	2.48	2.11	2.92	2.61	2.17	3.04	2.50	2.12	2.96	2.47	2.16	2.90
3rd+ move	2.53	2.29	2.59	2.22	2.49	2.49	2.58	2.27	2.55	2.53	2.29	2.61	2.25	2.15	2.52

Source: Own calculations based on the BHPS, waves 1-18

Table 6. Long-distance moves standardisation. Cohort * type of move * order of move interaction

Cohort	no controls			c. for gender			c. for partnership			c. for economic activity status			controlled for educational level		
	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90	75-79	80-84	85-90
1st move	0.65	0.58	0.51	0.65	0.59	0.5	0.65	0.59	0.51	0.65	0.58	0.5	0.65	0.59	0.5
2nd move	0.82	0.89	0.97	0.81	0.88	0.94	0.86	0.9	0.98	0.82	0.88	0.96	0.81	0.9	0.94
3rd+ move	1.25	1.29	1	1.22	1.26	0.96	1.28	1.28	0.99	1.25	1.29	1.01	1.11	1.21	0.97

Source: Own calculations based on the BHPS, waves 1-18

Table 7. Short-distance moves standardisation. Sex * type of move * order of move interaction

Sex	no controls		c. for cohort		c. for partnership		c. for economic activity status		c. for educational level		c. for parental SES		c. for all covariates	
	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.
1st move	RC	1.43	1	1.43	1	1.44	1	1.44	1	1.39	1	1.43	1	1.41
2nd move	2.73	3.39	2.71	3.39	2.80	3.52	2.65	3.46	2.70	3.28	2.70	3.39	2.60	3.25
3rd+ move	3.14	2.98	3.13	2.97	3.18	3.02	3.05	3.05	2.83	2.71	3.06	2.94	2.59	2.54

Source: Own calculations based on the BHPS, waves 1-18

Table 8. Long-distance moves standardisation. Sex * type of move * order of move interaction

Sex	no controls		c. for cohort		c. for partnership		c. for economic activity status		c. for educational level		c. for parental SES		c. for all covariates	
	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.	mal.	fem.
1st move	0.62	0.89	0.62	0.89	0.62	0.89	0.62	0.89	0.62	0.86	0.62	0.89	0.62	0.89
2nd move	0.99	1.19	0.99	1.19	1.02	1.23	0.96	1.21	0.98	1.15	0.98	1.19	0.95	1.14
3rd+ move	1.53	1.55	1.54	1.55	1.56	1.56	1.49	1.59	1.39	1.41	1.50	1.53	1.27	1.33

Source: Own calculations based on the BHPS, waves 1-18