

# Who Stays in Their Birthplace? The Role of Intergenerational Ties, Family Characteristics, and the Geographic Context

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## EXTENDED ABSTRACT

### Introduction and background:

Young adults are highly mobile because they experience a set of status changes during this time in their life courses that typically trigger a change of residence (Bernard, Bell, & Charles-Edwards, 2014; Rogers & Castro, 1981). For example, enrolling into higher education and entering the labour market strongly determine migration behaviour (e.g. Chudnovskaya & Kolk, 2017; Lundholm, 2007). However, a growing body of literature shows that the propensity to migrate is lower when family lives close (e.g. Clark, Duque-Calvache, & Palomares-Linares, 2017; Ermisch & Mulder, 2018; Mulder & Malmberg, 2014). Yet, it remains unclear who stays over time and the role of family in moving and staying behaviour has gone poorly theorised. We aim to identify who stays in the place of birth over time despite the high propensity to migrate during young adulthood. We also explore the role of family characteristics and the geographic context of the birthplace in this staying behaviour.

### Hypotheses:

We propose a three-level theoretical framework for staying in one's birthplace: family characteristics and ties to the family; the geography of the birthplace in which the staying behaviour takes place; and the individual's socio-economic and demographic characteristics. These three levels correspond to the idea that 'settled people don't move' due to accumulated local ties, especially in the form of ties to other people and personal life projects (Fischer & Malmberg, 2001) also known as *location-specific insider advantages* (Fischer, Holm, Malmberg, & Straubhaar, 2000).

*The family context and ties to the family* - To explore the role of the family as a determinant for residential behaviour, the hypotheses below are constructed around the following family characteristics: the socio-economic status of the parents; the composition of the family, the strength of family ties, and the transmission of residential behaviour within a family. Hypothesis 1A: we expect that individuals whose parents have lower incomes and have completed lower levels of education are more likely to stay in the birthplace than individuals whose parents have more favourable socio-economic statuses. Hypothesis 1B: taking age as an indicator of the need for care, we expect that individuals who have older parents or grandparents in the birthplace at age 18 are more likely to stay in their birthplace than individuals with younger parents and grandparents. Hypothesis 1C: we expect individuals from only-child families and the youngest sibling in multiple-child families to be more likely to stay in their birthplace than individuals who are the older sibling in their family. Hypothesis 1D: we expect that individuals who have older siblings living elsewhere at age 18 are less likely to stay in their birthplace than those whose older siblings have not moved away. Hypothesis 1E: we expect individuals who are born and raised in the birthplace of at least one of their parents and grandparents to be more likely to stay in this birthplace than those who do not share such intergenerational birthplace-ties. This may be the case because location-specific insider

advantages are not only accumulated over time but also transmitted across generations. Therefore, individuals who are born and raised in a place that is also the birthplace of their parent(s) or grandparent(s) can benefit from longstanding location-specific insider advantages making them more likely to stay in their birthplace than those who do not share such ties to their birthplace. This may also be the case because attitudes regarding staying or moving behaviour are passed on between family members or across generations, as has been argued in the literature on transnational migration (e.g. Guveli et al., 2016); in that case, the residential behaviour of young adults may be mirroring that of their parents and grandparents.

*The geographic context* – Hypothesis 2: we expect people whose birthplace is part of an urban centre; is densely inhabited by fellow young adults; has easy access to institutes for higher education; or has low unemployment rates to be more likely to stay in their birthplace than people whose birthplace is rural; sparsely inhabited by fellow young adults; has low access to institutes for higher education; or has high rates of unemployment.

*Individual characteristics* – We expect that stayers differ from movers regarding several individual characteristics at age 30. Hypothesis 3A: we expect males to be among the stayers more than the movers. Hypothesis 3B: we expect individuals who have married early and individuals with resident children to be found among the stayers more than the movers. Hypothesis 3C: we expect lower levels of education; lower incomes; and long spans of unemployment to be prevalent among stayers - and in particular among *intergenerational stayers* - than movers.

### **Dataset and measurements:**

For this study, we use Swedish population register data from the Linnaeus database, which contains micro-linked data of all people who were alive in or born after 1932 in Sweden. We selected all Swedish-born individuals from the three birth cohorts who were 30 years old in 2011, 2012, and 2013. The final sample for analysis comprises only those individuals from the three birth cohorts whose residential information is complete for ages 0 to 30; who have lived in their birthplace continuously until age 18; and who were still alive in Sweden by age 30 (N=187,637). We linked all individuals with sufficient parental information to their parents and grandparents.

*The dependent variable* – The dependent variable for the logistic regression consists of 1 = having stayed in the birthplace by age 30 and 0 = moved away from the birthplace by age 30. We look at moving and staying behaviour until age 30 because migration peaks well before the ages of being established on the labour-market (Lundholm, 2007), which was confirmed more recently by Kolk (2017).

*Independent variables* – In hypothesis 1E, we are interested in the effect of being born and raised in the birthplace of at least one of your parents and grandparents. To test this hypothesis, we determined the place of birth for each individual in the three generations and ‘standardised’ these over time, taking into account all possible administrative changes on the municipality level between 1932 and 2013 (i.e. code-changes, name-changes, merges, and splits). Our data contained roughly 2900 unique municipality codes, which we reduced to 290 unique municipality codes consistent with the layout of Sweden in 2013. *The measurements of all other independent variables and control variables are described in the final version of the paper consistent with the hypotheses.*

### **Methods:**

In the final version of the paper, we first model the staying and moving behaviour in one’s birthplace by means of a logistic regression, where 1 = stayer by age 30 and 0 = mover by age 30. The hypotheses regarding family characteristics at age 18 and the geographic context of the birthplace (i.e. hypothesis 1A through 1E and 2) are tested here. We then describe differences

between movers and stayers regarding individual characteristics at age 30 by means of descriptive statistics (i.e. hypothesis 3A, 3B, and 3C). Here, we highlight a specific group of stayers: the *intergenerational stayers*, who were born, raised, and then stayed in the birthplace of at least one of their parents and one of their grandparents. In comparing regular stayers to intergenerational we aim to give insights into longstanding location-specific insider advantages and the transmission of residential behaviour within families.

### Preliminary findings:

As shown in Table 1, we find that around 60% of the index cohorts have moved out of their birthplace by age 30, whereas 40% has stayed. Markedly, we find that more than 50% of these stayers are born and raised in the place of birth of at least one of their parents and one of their grandparents; i.e. intergenerational stayers. We can also see some stark differences between stayers and movers regarding sex, being married, and levels of education. Consistent with hypothesis 3A, stayers seem to be males predominantly (i.e. 60%), whereas movers are females predominantly. However, concerning marriage status (i.e. hypothesis 3B), stayers are married less often than movers by age 30. We do find that most stayers have only completed secondary education, followed by tertiary education and then primary education. Instead, most movers have completed tertiary education, followed by secondary education, and then primary education. We can see an inversion between the percentages in secondary education and tertiary education among the stayers compared to the same levels of education among the movers.

Our first descriptive findings indeed hint at the idea that stayers differ from movers on the individual level. The results from the logistic regression will further explore the role of family and geography in the likelihood of staying in the birthplace. We are particularly interested to find out more about the effect of intergenerational birthplace-ties because our descriptive findings hint at the idea that staying behaviour runs in families. The preliminary findings reiterate that the family provides a major context for migration studies (e.g. Massey, 1990; Mulder, 2007, 2018).

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics at age 30: percentage or mean (SD)**

	Total <i>N</i> = 187,637	Stayer by age 30 <i>N</i> = 71,931 (38.34%)	Mover by age 30 <i>N</i> = 115,706 (61.66%)
Male	51.92	58.95	47.56
Married	22.28	19.51	24.00
Partnered	42.60	41.96	43.00
Resident child(ren)	41.35	43.63	40.14
Loss of parent(s)	11.03	12.06	10.39
Intergenerational birthplace ties	46.89	52.82	43.21
Education level			
Primary education	7.07	10.46	4.97
Secondary education	42.41	58.76	32.34
Tertiary education	49.45	29.13	62.08
Others	1.07	1.65	0.72
Unemployment	6.33	6.55	6.19
Annual disposable income (SEK)	230,324.9 (251,877.8)	223,612 (181,683.6)	237,614.3 (200,889.6)

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