Title: "You can't go home again. Independent living in Uruguay in the context of delayed transitions to adulthood".

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1- INTRODUCTION.

When family values are strong and welfare provision is weak, leaving home is not easy. Besides having little or no pressure from you parents, it implies being financially able to sustain an independent household and, in most cases, being ready to commit to a long-term relationship and (eventually) start a new family. However, this is not always the case. In some countries, public support for young people is readily available and non-family living arrangements widespread. Then, leaving home is "easier", or at least it occurs at younger ages.

This is how the comparative literature in Europe has explained regional differences in the age at home leaving and other life course transitions (Iacovou, 2001; Aassve et al, 2002; Jones 1995; Holdsworth, 2000). In Southern Europe, a region with strong familistic values and a relatively weak welfare system, young people not only leave home later, but the majority still do it to live with a partner (Billari et al 2000). In other countries with similar levels of economic development, marriage (or cohabitation) is no longer the main reason to leave home.

According to Jones (1995) what undermined the link between home leaving and union formation in Britain was the expansion of education and the change in marriage patterns registered in the sixties and seventies. The new trend leaded to the emergence of single-person households and peer households, consolidating a new stage between home leaving and the formation of a new family (Jones 1995). In the same line, research in the US have shown how leaving home became increasingly less sensitive to the timing of marriage as a consequence of the steady growth in non-family living arrangements; a route out of the parental home that became an alternative for the generation that came of age during the seventies (Fussel & Furstenberg 2005; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999).

In fact, according to Danziger and Rouse (2007) the most striking trend in young people's living arrangement in the US is not the greater percentage of people living with parents but the increasing number of people living on their own or with persons other than a spouse. As has been the case with the emergence of other social innovations, the adoption of non-family living arrangements in the US was led by more educated groups becoming a common practice for other groups later (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999).

However, in spite of the changes in the destinations, the age at home leaving in the majority of developed nations has been on the rise (Newman & Aptekar, 2007; Beaupré et al, 2006; Billari 2004; Corijn & Klijzing 2001) even in countries where the transition out of the parental home still occurs at relatively early ages like in the Netherlands (Billari & Liefbroer, 2007).

Accordingly, the proportion of young adults living with parents in these countries has been increasing, a change that seems to have been particularly rapid between the sixties and eighties (Young, 1996; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999), and significantly more pronounced in countries where home leaving remained closely linked to marriage (Cordón, 1997).

A number of analyses have explained the protracted period of dependency as a coping mechanism of in the context of deteriorating economic opportunities. Youth unemployment has been recognized as one of the main causes of the delayed transitions out of the parental home (Cherlin et al, 1997). In fact, leaving home is the most important predictor of poverty entry among young people in Europe (Aassve et al 2005). It has also been argued that this relationship is indeed causal and that the prospect of economic hardship plays a role in young people's decision to stay at home (Aassve et al 2005b). Moreover, the contribution to the household of employed young people that delays departure can be a key factor in reducing the poverty risk for the family (Ayllón, 2009).

However, according to a series of other studies, it seems that the opportunities and constraints generated by labour-market conditions, housing prices and welfare systems can only partially explain some of the long term trends in home leaving and the persistent differences between countries. At the individual level, the positive effect of personal earning on the chances of leaving the parental home has been repeatedly demonstrated, although its effect is less decisive in countries where public support to youth is available (Billari 2002). Income is also a less decisive factor for women in countries where the traditional breadwinner model is still predominant, in which case finding a partner is more important than personal earnings (Aassve et al, 2000).

The effect of parental income also varies according to the cultural setting. Support from the family of origin is negatively associated with home leaving in communities where family ties are stronger, revealing that the decision of staying at home is not only a response to economic difficulties but also the expression of preferences shaped by cultural values and social norms (Holdsworth 2000; Iacouvou, 2001, Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). In fact, Danziger and Rouse (2007) have found that although economic variables have played a role, the delays on young people's emancipation in the past decades have not been primarily driven by economic factors but by changes in social norms and expectations among young people.

Delayed Transitions to Adulthood

Although analyzes focusing on the micro level factors associated with the decision to form a new household have greatly contributed to the understanding of the process, the long-term changes in home leaving have to be placed in the context of the broader transformation on the transition from adolescence to adulthood in contemporary societies.

Since the second half of the 20th century, the Transition to Adulthood (TA) have become longer, more complex, and less orderly (Osgood et al, 2004). The traditional path established during the post-war period, in which young people transited from school to work and from family of origin to family of reproduction in only a few years, is no longer the norm (Furstenberg et al 2005). Young people are taking longer to achieve the traditional markers of adulthood: finishing schooling, getting a full time job, forming a union (marriage or cohabitation), having children *and* leaving the parental home. Besides, the stages are less defined, with overlapping and reversible statuses, and increasing de-standardization (Shanahan 2000, Corijn & Klijzing 2001, Elzinga & Liefbroer 2007).

For some authors, the transformations observed in the last decades have been so fundamental that they have given rise to a new stage in the life course (Hartman & Swartz, 2006; Benson & Furstenberg, 2003; Arnet, 2000).

In the optimistic interpretation, the postponement of the TA is seen as a result of individual decisions in the context of increased opportunities for young people in post-industrial societies. In this case, the postponement of adulthood is associated with the expansion of education, the emancipation of women, the emergence of post-material values, the improvement of living standards in Western developed societies and the relaxation of social controls from the family and the community, a series of processes that have resulted in more opportunities for young people to construct their biographies according to individual preferences and choices (e.g. Arnet, 2000, Beaujot & Kerr, 2007, Billari, 2001). On the other hand, some scholars have presented a less positive interpretation, where the delay is understood as a coping mechanism in the context of increasingly precarious labour market and living conditions, raising housing costs and the necessity to stay within the educational system for a longer period of time due to the inflation of educational credentials (e.g. Clark, 2007, Cote & Bynner, 2008).

What is not under debate is that the delay of independence implies an extended period of economic support, usually provided by the state or by the family, or by some combination of the two. In the context of developing countries, where public support is usually scarcely available, the transformations in the TA entail significant risks in terms of the intergenerational reproduction of poverty. While individuals in more privileged positions can

take advantage of the extended dependence period to improve or maintain their conditions of living, others have no option but to take a "fast track" which usually guarantees the reproduction of poor living conditions (Mora y Oliveira 2008).

Uruguay

Most of the studies available to date have focused on Europe and North America. With the exception of De Vos (1989) not many specific studies on the home leaving process have been produced in Latin America, although some have analyzed it as an aspect of the Transition to Adulthood (Echarri & Perez Amador 2006; Perez Amador 2006; Camarano et al 2006, Mora & Oliveira 2008). They all have pointed out the coexistence of completely different experiences of the TA among young people, shaped by persistent gender and economic inequalities in the region.

Although Uruguay shares this and other characteristics with the countries in the region, its socio-demographic dynamics present some distinct characteristics. Besides being the most urbanized country of the region and one of only four Latin American nations that have reached below replacement fertility levels (along with Cuba, Costa Rica and Chile), it is also first in the ranking of aging countries in Latin America. High emigration rates became a structural component of the country's demographic dynamic (Macadar & Pellegrino, 2007) after the significant (positive) migration flow that had compensated for slow population growth reversed its direction in the second half of the 20th century.

Culturally, Uruguay share some of the characteristics of Southern European countries due to the strong influence of Spanish immigration in a region that was relatively uninhabited by native population. Strong family ties, centrality of marriage, co-residence with parents during the schooling period (with the exception of those living outside the capital) and weak welfare provision. However, it clearly differs from European countries in its poverty levels and significant social inequalities.

Analyzes of fertility and nuptiallity patterns on the last decades (Cabella, 2008) have suggested that the country is experiencing the so called Second Demographic Transition (SDT) (Lestahaeghe & Van de Kaa 1986, Sobotka 2008) although some of these changes have been observed in a context still characterized by a patriarchal model of family relations and significant differences between social classes (Paredes 2003). In fact, it is interesting to note that the analyses of different socio-demographic dimensions in Uruguay present a combination of both first and second demographic transition-related behaviors depending on the sector of the population studied (Varela et al, 2008, Pardo & Peri, 2008).

Regarding the situation of youth we know that higher incentives to invest in human capital for the newer generations (due to increasing payoffs of education) have implied a longer period of schooling and subsequent delays in family formation (Bucheli et al, 1999). However, different results have been presented by Videgain (2006), who analyzed three cohorts of women, born from 1946 to 1976, finding no significant changes in the timing of their first union, their first job, or their first birth.

Carlos Filgueira also analyzed the trajectories of young people from different social sectors in their transit to adulthood (ECLAC, 1998). This study shows significant differences between men and women, but also between individuals with different levels of education. Recent data has confirmed these findings, showing that the less privileged groups not only present a "faster" model, but also one in which the different events are experienced simultaneously. In contrast, more educated individuals tend to experience the events in a sequence that starts with parental home leaving, and is followed by union formation and only then childbearing (Ciganda, 2008).

Although the age at the entry into first partnership rose appreciably in the last quarter of the 20th century (Cabella 2007), there are still significant differences between social strata, with less educated women experiencing this transition four years earlier than those with post-secondary education (Buchelli et al 2002).

International emigration has become a central component of the demographic dynamic of Uruguay, particularly affecting young people. Thus, the stock of migrants outside Uruguay has been estimated to be 15% of its population. Analyzing the profile of recent migrants with 2006 data, Macadar & Pellegrino (2007) have found that almost 60% were living as children of the head of household or spouse before leaving the country. If we also consider that "unemployment" and "low income" were the two main reasons for migration declared by the families of the migrants, it is not difficult to see how emigration has become a strategy to achieve independence for a growing number of young people.

In fact, the labor market has been a particularly inhospitable place for young people. Not only is the unemployment rate for youth four times higher than for the rest of the population, but the quality of available jobs is also lower, with a significant proportion of young people not covered by social security (Filardo et al, 2009). The timing of the transition to work has also been affected by fewer and fewer people starting to work at younger ages in the newer generations (Filardo et al, 2009).

Thus, the experience of Uruguayan youth seems to be characterized by the delay of key life course transitions (first union, the transition from school to work and the transition to parenthood) but also by remarkable differences between social sectors.

Since no specific studies on home leaving have been produced in the country (and very few in the region) a large number of questions are still to be answered. In this paper we will try to establish whether or not young people in Uruguay are delaying home leaving as is the case in more affluent countries, paying particular attention to the gaps between men and women and between different social sectors. Given the cultural proximity of Uruguay to Southern European countries, it will be interested to know to what extent young Uruguayans also experience home leaving in "Mediterranean fashion" (Bilari et al, 2000) as its counterparts in Southern Europe. In this sense, we will try to determine if home leaving is still closely associated with union formation, what is the effect of social inequalities and how are this factors affecting the possibilities of independence and the living arrangements of young people in the country.

2- METHODOLOGY

The use of longitudinal or retrospective data is probably the ideal way to approach our research questions. Unfortunately, the availability of this kind of information on life course transitions is very limited in Uruguay, particularly that which relates to the Transitions to Adulthood. In this paper we use Uruguayan National Households Surveys, the only continuous series available covering a relatively long time-period, from 1981 to 2005.

These surveys are collected every year from a representative sample of the country, excluding communities with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants. They include information on household characteristics (materials, energy sources, accessibility, resources) as well as information on individuals (sociodemographic characteristics, health, education, occupation, employment, income).

In order to observe whether or not young people in Uruguay are delaying the formation of an independent household, we first assess the proportion of people living independently at 18 to 32 years old for the entire period. We then compare the change experienced by age groups, gender, and different levels of education (elementary, secondary, post-secondary). Every time different educational levels are compared, the analysis include only individuals ages 21 to 32 in order to avoid censoring of 18 to 20 year-olds that have not started university.

Living independently is defined as being head of household, spouse, or other family or non-family member of a household with a same-generation head.

We also analyze the evolution of youth living arrangements throughout the period. Following the classification proposed by Yelowitz (2007) we distinguish between 4 categories of living arrangements:

Parents: Living as a "Child" in any type of household.

Nuclear family (includes the "traditional" forms of independence): a couple, a couple with children, or a single-parent household.

One-person households.

Economic (roommates): one person or a couple (with or without children) living with others (relatives or non-relatives) of the same generation. The household head is 32 years of age or younger.

After the descriptive analysis we use a logistic regression to estimate the probabilities of living independently. Three models are fitted for both men and women, the first considering all men or women between 21 and 32 years of age, and the other two considering those that

are in a partnership and those that are single respectively. Four different time periods are considered in order to allow the comparison over time.

The predictors used in logistic regression model were: education (elementary, secondary, post-secondary), income from main activity (less than 200 dollars, between 200 and 600, and more than 600 dollars) and age.

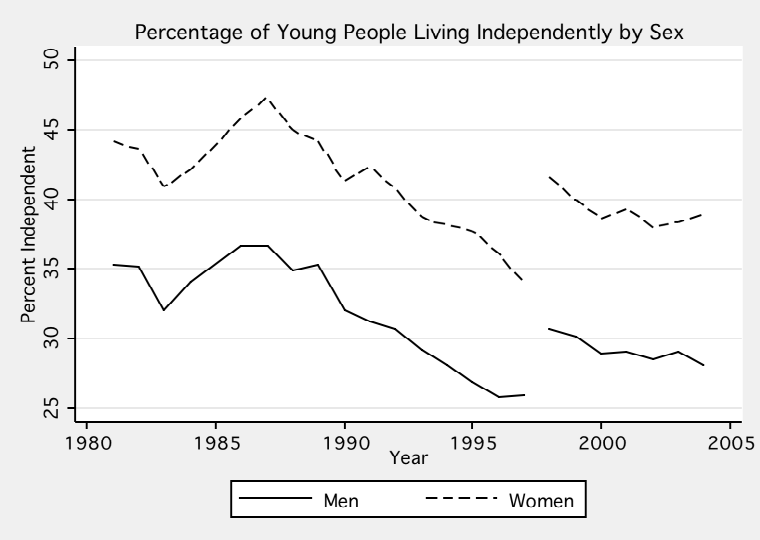
Married, cohabiting, divorced individuals as well as widows were considered in a partnership. Those classified as single were considered not to have a partner.

The four selected periods were: 1981 to 1986, 1987 to 1991, 1992 to 1997 and 1998 to 2005.

5- RESULTS

Graphs 1 shows how the percentage of young people (between 18 and 32 years old) living independently has been falling steadily since 1987 for both men and women [1].

Graph 1



As it has been observed repeatedly in other countries women leave earlier than men, a characteristic that has not changed over time as shown by the persistent gap (of approximately ten percentage points).

The severe economic crisis seemed to have affected the possibilities of emancipation for young people immediately after 1982, the year in which the marriage rate reached one of its lower values in the second half of the 20th century (Filgueira 1996). The biggest portion of the decline in the proportion of young people living independently was experienced between the mid eighties and late nineties, showing a more stable pattern in the last years, even a slight recovery in the case of women.

Table 1- Young People Living With Parents by Age Group

Age Group	Men		Women	
	1981-1983	2003-2005	1981-1983	2003-2005
18-21	81.2	81.6	69.6	72.7
22-25	57.0	65.7	46.8	54.2
26-29	32.7	43.0	29.5	36.3
30-32	21.0	29.8	21.9	23.3
40-42	7.8	10.6	10.0	10.9

Source: Own calculations based on National Household Surveys data

Table 1 shows the reverse of this trend. The proportion of young people living with parents has increased in all age groups, although the change in the case of men has been relatively more pronounced and extended over the age range. The difference in the proportion of women living at home by age 30 is clearly smaller than in the case of men. Although the

[1] The discontinuity registered in 1998 is explained by a change in the sampling frame used in the NHSs, updated after the 1996 national census.

number of 40 years old leaving with parents in 2005 is larger in both cases, the relatively smaller difference in this age group shows that the decline in the proportion of young people living independently is in fact a delay in the age at which men and women leave home.

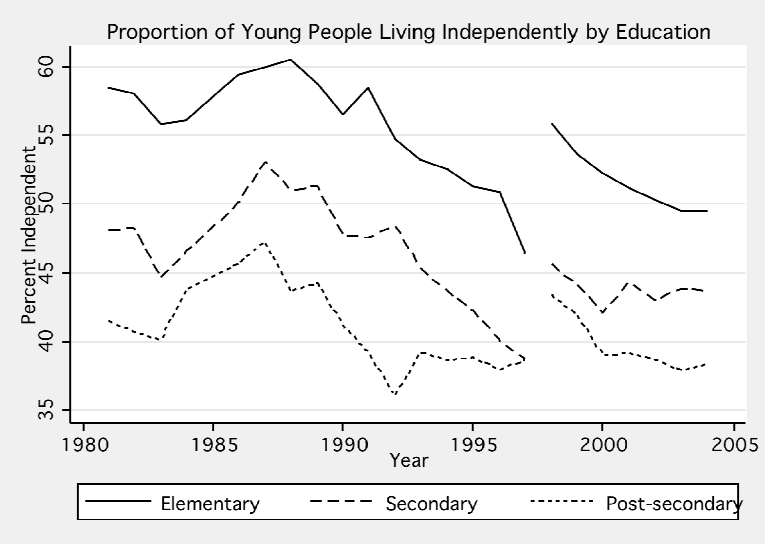
Table 2- Young People (21-32) by Education Level 1981-2005

Education	Men		Women	
	1981-1983	2003-2005	1981-1983	2003-2005
Elementary	33.8	18.9	32.2	14.3
Secondary	56.6	61.5	59.0	60.4
Post-secondary	9.6	19.7	8.8	25.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Own calculations based on National Household Surveys data

Although there has been a significant improvement in young people's educational attainment (Table 2), only a minority reaches third level education, and a significant proportion of men and women still receive only elementary education.

Graph 2



Graph two shows that the process of establishing an independent household is significantly different for young people (between ages 21 and 32) with different education levels. If educational attainment was the only factor affecting home leaving, we would say that the relationship is negative and those that prolong their education leave home later. However, In terms of the change rate over time, the more educated seemed to have experienced less dramatic transformations if their ability to establish new households, reaching a stable pattern after a small recovery at the beginning of the nineties.

As a result of the delay in the formation of independent households, the proportion of young people living with parents has been growing regardless of education level, for both men (Table 3) and women (table 4). Although the three education groups have experienced this increase, in the case of men those with university level education have shown a recovery by

the late nineties. In the case of women the situation is similar, with a recovery among those with more education by the end of the period.

Table 3 - Living Arrangements by Education, Men (21-32)

	1984-1986	1987-1989	1990-1993	1994-1997	1998-2000	2001-2003	2004-2005
Parents							
Elementary	36.0	35.0	39.7	43.1	40.5	44.0	45.1
Secondary	46.3	43.8	48.7	53.4	51.1	50.7	50.7
Post-Secondary	48.8	51.2	57.1	59.0	56.8	58.6	57.4
Economic							
Elementary	4.3	4.1	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.1	2.7
Secondary	2.8	2.5	2.2	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.7
Post-Secondary	6.0	6.5	5.5	6.9	7.5	9.0	11.1
Unipersonal							
Primary	1.9	1.9	1.4	1.6	1.9	1.8	2.3
Secondary	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.2	2.4	2.8
Post-Secondary	1.5	2.9	3.1	3.7	5.4	4.5	5.7
Others							
Elementary	13.3	12.5	12.6	14.3	13.8	14.1	13.4
Secondary	9.3	9.0	9.1	11.1	10.4	11.1	10.6
Post-Secondary	6.6	5.1	5.9	5.0	5.6	6.6	5.0
Nuclear							
Elementary	44.5	46.4	42.9	37.9	40.5	36.9	36.5
Secondary	40.3	43.4	38.6	31.3	33.1	32.7	32.2
Post-Secondary	37.1	34.4	28.4	25.5	24.7	21.4	20.9

Source: Own calculations based on National Household Surveys data

It could be argued that the postponement of the formation of new households among less educated sectors is explained by the deterioration of their economic situation. However, it seems to be more than economic hardship behind these trends.

While economic (living with roomates) living arrangements and one-person households have maintained their level among or even decreased among less educated youth, they have increased significantly among university students and graduates.

The increase in non-family living arrangements and co-residence with parents has resulted in a reduction in the proportion of young people living in nuclear-family type of households, especially among those with more education. Although this type of living arrangement is still

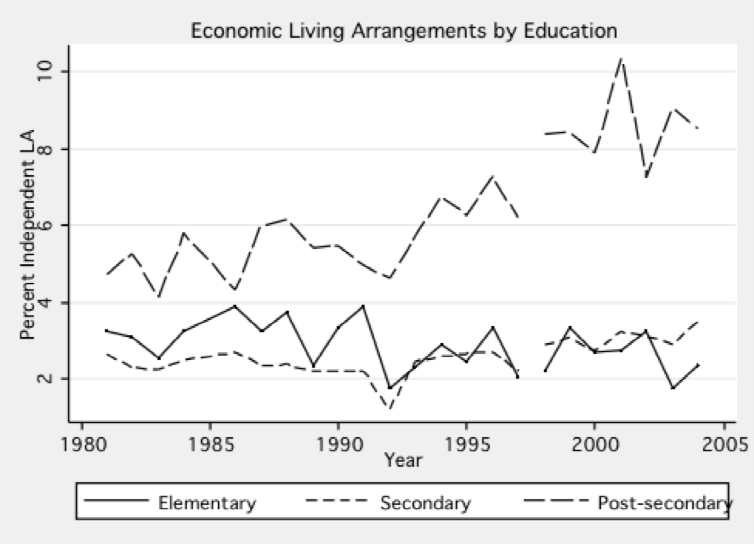
the preferred among those living independently in the three education groups, the difference between the proportion living in nuclear-family households and non-family households among university students and graduates has reduced widely throughout the period.

Table 4 - Living Arrangements by Education, Women (21-32)

	1984-1986	1987-1989	1990-1993	1994-1997	1998-2000	2001-2003	2004-2005
Parents							
Elementary	25.7	25.1	26.1	29.7	26.3	28.7	29.1
Secondary	39.2	36.4	39.7	43.5	41.4	41.4	39.7
Post-Secondary	48.1	48.3	54.1	54.6	50.0	53.3	53.1
Economic							
Elementary	2.9	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.0	3.1
Secondary	2.4	2.1	1.8	2.4	2.6	3.0	2.9
Post-Secondary	4.1	5.4	5.0	6.5	8.7	8.9	8.2
Unipersonal							
Elementary	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.7
Secondary	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.4
Post-Secondary	1.8	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.6	3.9	5.2
Others							
Elementary	10.3	8.3	10.1	11.3	10.6	10.9	9.8
Secondary	8.9	7.6	8.3	9.8	9.2	9.6	9.3
Post-Secondary	6.8	5.6	5.6	5.1	6.1	5.6	4.3
Nuclear							
Elementary	60.7	64.0	61.0	56.5	60.7	57.9	57.3
Secondary	48.8	53.1	49.4	43.6	45.6	45.0	46.8
Post-Secondary	39.2	38.1	32.7	31.1	31.6	28.4	29.2

Source: Own calculations based on National Household Surveys data

Graph 3

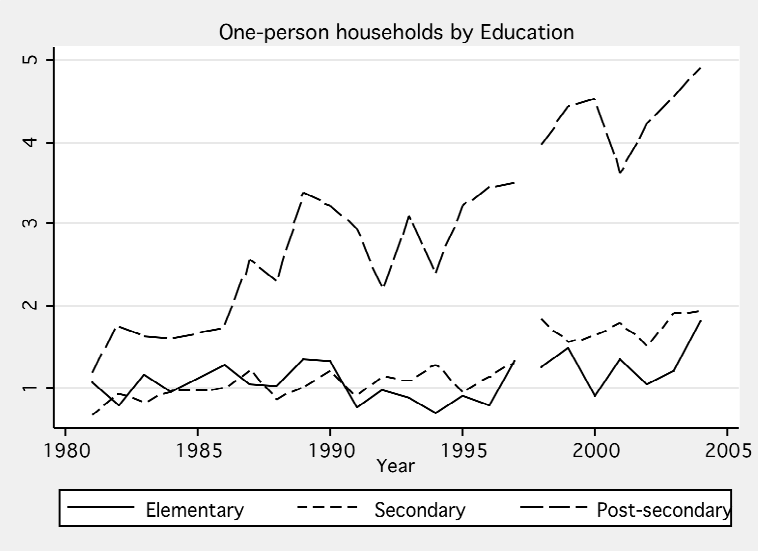


Graph 3 shows the evolution in the proportion of young people living in economic living arrangements. This kind of household seems to be an increasingly popular alternative only for those with

higher levels of education. The increase has been marked since 1995, most likely as a response to the postponement of union formation and the need to pool resources with other in order to achieve independence.

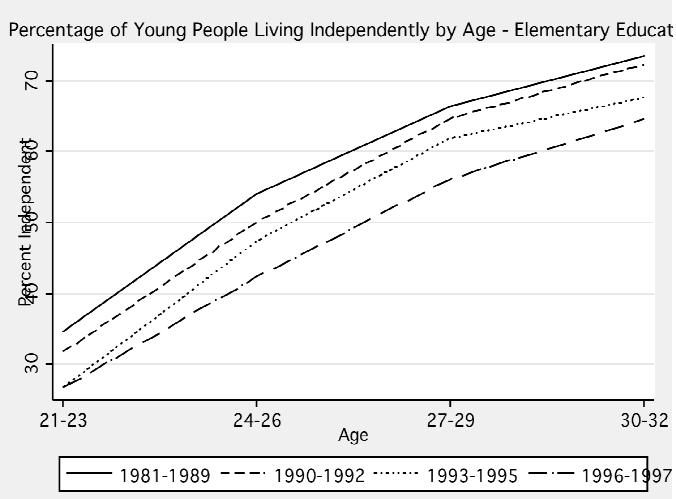
Graph 4

One-person households have followed a similar trajectory (Graph 4). Even though there is and small increase among those with less education, the differences between education levels here are also notable.



It seems that the formation of non-family living arrangements have made it possible for university students and graduates to avoid further delays in the transition out of the parental home. In fact, when we look at the change over time by age groups, it is clear that the rate of change has been higher for lee educated groups (Graphs 5 and 6).

Graph 5



Graph 6

As we mentioned before, the difference between these two groups could be attributed to a the deterioration of economic conditions. Although we do not intend here to weight the effect of different factors in the postponement of home leaving, it is possible to obtain some indication of the effect of economic factors by looking at the evolution of young people's (18-32) income throughout the period (Graph 5).

Until 1988 the curve describes a similar trajectory than the one we observe in graph 1 (proportion of young people 18-32 living independently), with a strong decline associated with the 1982 crisis and a recovery to pre-crisis levels by 1988 (higher, in the case of living independently and women's income). After 1988, however, the evolution of the two indicators is no longer associated and we observe a steady decline of independent young people (Graph 1) while their income remains stable or slightly grows in the case of women.

Graph 5

The 2002 economic crisis seems to have little or no impact on the decision of young people to form a new household, although it does have a strong effect on income, especially in the case of men, which slowly recovers after this year but still present significantly lower levels than in the pre-crisis period.

A similar process has been found in the case of the evolution of marriage rates throughout the 20th Century. Historically, marriages rates presented cyclical fluctuations in response to crisis and periods of economic prosperity, however the evolution of the indicator becomes insensitive to economic fluctuations at the beginning of the nineties, when marriage rates showed a steady decline in spite of a relatively favorable economic situation (Cabella, 2007). Although we do not dispose of information prior to 1981, as in the case of legal unions, the independent evolution of the two processes might as well be an indication that the decision

of forming a new household is no longer intimately related with the economic situation of young people. Moreover, as have been found elsewhere (Danziger and Rouse 2007), the postponement in household formation among young people in the last decades seems to have been driven primarily by cultural changes and changes in the timing of union formation than by economic factors.

The results of the logistic regression allowed us to shed some light on the dynamics behind the observed decline in four particular periods: 1981-1986, 1987-1991, 1992-1997, and 1998-2005. The first model estimates the effect of the predictors for men (Table 5) and women (Table 6) between 21 and 32 years of age. The other two present the estimates for young people that are married or in a common law union and for those that are single.

As shown in Table 5, the effects of the predictors are fairly consistent over time in the case of men. As expected, age is a relevant predictor, with the odds of living independently increasing around 25% for each additional year.

The effect of education is also significant and negative in the first model—the odds of living independently are reduced around 30% for those that have secondary education in comparison with those with elementary school only and around 40% in the case of university students and graduates.

The direction of the effect of income, as well as its magnitude, is relatively stable throughout the period. Having an income of between 200 and 600 dollars makes the odds of living independently approximately 2.5 – 2.6 times higher than those with an income of less than 200 dollars. Likewise, the odds significantly increase (between 5 and 6 times) for those with an income higher than 600 dollars.

The effect of income is positively associated regardless of marital status, although its effect is smaller when this variable is taken into account. This might be explained by the overrepresentation of couples from poorer sectors in the first group and by the effect of parental support among those that are single. The economic support from their families of origin is key for example for many young men and women that have to move to the capital to complete their university studies. The observed emergence of economic leaving arrangements where resources are pooled and cost low might be another factor to consider in the explanation.

In the case of women (Table 6) the effect of income changes over time. The effect of both levels of income reduced the odds of living independently at the beginning of the period, which is explained by the predominance of a male breadwinner model in which a large

number of young women moved out to their parents' home but continue being financially dependent on their partners.

Table 5 - Odds Ratios, Living Independently - Men

Variable	1981 -1986 Odds Ratio		1987 -1991 Odds Ratio		1992 -1997 Odds Ratio		1998 -2005 Odds Ratio	
	All							
Income								
<200 (Ref.)								
200-600 CAD	2.65	**	*2.60*	**	2.54	**	2.49	**
>600 CAD	4.61	**	5.89	**	4.99	**	4.91	**
Age	1.26	**	1.29	**	1.26	**	1.24	**
Education								
Elementary (Ref.)								
Secondary Edu.	0.72	**	0.67	**	0.71	**	0.69	**
Post-Secondary Edu.	0.62	**	0.58	**	0.58	**	0.60	**
	In a union (marriage or cohabitation)							
Income								
<200 (Ref.)								
200-600 CAD	1.86	**	1.83	**	1.64	**	1.81	**
>600 CAD	2.77	**	3.63	**	3.46	**	3.89	**
Age	1.13	**	1.17	**	1.14	**	1.13	**
Education								
Elementary (Ref.)								
Secondary Edu.	0.86	**	0.80	**	0.79	**	0.83	**
Post-Secondary Edu.	1.41	**	1.52	**	1.45	**	1.41	**
	Single Men							
Income								
<200 (ref)								
200-600 CAD	1.76	**	1.47	**	1.98	**	1.83	**
>600 CAD	2.08	**	1.84	**	3.32	**	2.58	**
Age	1.11	**	1.13	**	1.09	**	1.11	**
Education								
Elementary								
Secondary Edu.	0.61	**	0.63	**	0.65	**	0.91	
Post-Secondary Edu.	0.97		1.35	**	1.36	**	2.03	**

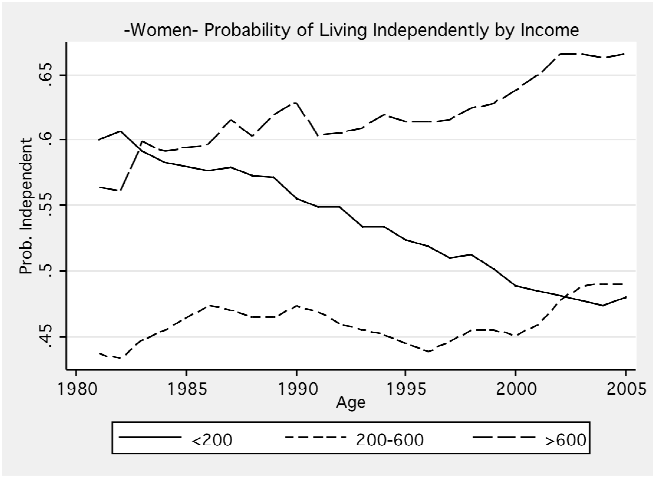
** significant at 1% * significant at 5%

Table 6 - Odds Ratios, Living Independently - Women

	1981 -1986		1987 -1991		1997 -1996		1998 -2005	
Variable	Odds Ratio		Odds Ratio		Odds Ratio		Odds Ratio	
			All					
Income								
<200 (Ref.)								
200-600 CAD	0.60	**	*0.58*	**	0.67	**	0.85	**
>600 CAD	0.82	**	1.00		1.22	**	1.53	**
Age	1.22	**	1.26	**	1.25	**	1.23	**
Education								
Elementary (Ref.)								
Secondary Edu.	0.74	**	0.72	**	0.74	**	0.68	**
Post-Secondary Edu.	0.55	**	0.50	**	0.52	**	0.50	**
			In a union (marriage or cohabitation)					
Income								
<200 (Ref.)								
200-600 CAD	0.76	**	0.72	**	0.74	**	0.92	*
>600 CAD	0.93		1.21		1.20	*	1.77	**
Age	1.12	**	1.14	**	1.14	**	1.13	**
Education								
Elementary (Ref.)								
Secondary Edu.	0.79	**	0.78	**	0.82	**	0.80	**
Post-Secondary Edu.	1.22	*	1.44	**	1.47	**	1.35	**
			Single Women					
Income								
<200 (ref)								
200-600 CAD	1.34	**	1.15		1.43	**	1.66	**
>600 CAD	1.74	*	1.49	**	2.17	**	2.40	**
Age	1.11	**	1.12	**	1.10	**	1.10	**
Education								
Elementary								
Secondary Edu.	0.74	**	0.73	**	0.76	*	0.64	**
Post-Secondary Edu.	1.29	**	1.47	**	1.64	**	1.32	**

** significant at 1% * significant at 5%

Graph 7.



Graph 7 shows how the probability of living independently falls steeply for women with little or no income, reflecting the significant transformations in gender roles and family models experienced in the twenty-five-year period considered.

In fact, the change in the experience of women has been remarkable, only by the end of the period it becomes similar to that of men, with both levels of income affecting positively the chances of leaving independently.

An interesting result of the addition of marital status for both men and women is the change on the effect of post-secondary education. In fact the odds ratio of living independently for those with post-secondary education are higher than those with elementary education in both groups. This specification of the relationship between education and the probability of living independently significantly changes the picture obtained in the first section. In fact, those that prolong their schooling period are not less but more likely to live independently than those with less education regardless of being or not being in a partnership.

While it has been established that educational attainment has a positive effect on the age at home leaving (Corijn & Klijzing 2001; Buck and Scott, 1993), what was less expected is the higher probability of more educated individuals in partnerships.

Single young people with post-secondary education have more chances of live independently because they seemed to be the only group that have significantly incorporated non-family living arrangements as an alternative. However, it is probable that this is not exclusively the expression of cultural differences, as this group is more likely to receive extended parental support than their less educated counterparts. Although we do not count with information on family transfers in the NHS, this is a very promising line for future research in light of the latest data on youth that has been collected in the country.

In the case of those that are married or in common law unions there seems to be a more direct influence of economic inequalities given the large number of couples from middle and lower strata that have no resources to establish an independent household having to remain

with one of their families of origin. The coexistence of parents and married or cohabiting couples from more privileged sectors is exceptional, what explains the higher chance of living independently among married young people with more education. This suggests that the support from the family of origin to gain independence might be playing a significant role in this case as well.

CONCLUSIONS

The results presented in this study show that young people in Uruguay have been delaying the formation of an independent household over the last two decades. Today, more individuals between 18 and 32 years of age are living with their parents than 20 years ago. However, even though young people—both men and women—of different social backgrounds have been affected by these changes, our findings showed some significant differences between sub groups in terms of the magnitude of the changes and the effect and direction of the factors associated with them.

Women have experienced significant changes over the twenty five year period observed, from a situation in which many of them they leave their parental home but continued to be economically dependent of their partners to a situation similar to that of men, in which personal earnings are a decisive factor in the probabilities of forming a household.

In terms of educational attainment/social background, young people with lower levels of education have experienced the most noticeable declines in the formation of new households, suggesting that the delay is not exclusively a product of a decision to invest in human capital. In fact, we found that those that prolong their schooling are not less but more likely to leave home among both married and single young people, which is in part explained by the large number of couples from less privileged strata that cannot afford the formation of an independent household, remaining at the parental home after marriage.

However, we also know that it is not possible to establish a direct association between young people's economic situation and the delay in home leaving. Similarly to what has happened in the case of marriage rates, the steepest decline of the proportion of young people leaving independently have been experienced in a period of relatively favorable economic conditions. Nevertheless, this does not mean that economic factors are not playing any role in the decisions of young people at the individual level. The opportunities to share the cost of the household at an earlier stage of the life course, which in many cases is a precondition to

achieve independence, have been limited given the postponement on the formation of unions.

In fact, the adoption of economic living arrangements is part of what has prevented more educated young people to experience further delays in the age at home leaving. Besides, one-person households have also become more and more popular among university students and graduates. The profound changes in marriage and divorce patterns and the postponement of union formation registered in the last decades (Cabella, 2007) seem to have left room for greater tolerance of "non family" living arrangements among individuals of the same generation. Thus, the relatively smaller reduction in the number of people living independently among those with postsecondary education could be explained by the growing popularity of less traditional alternatives, which allow young people to achieve independence by decoupling this transition from union formation and childbearing, and by pooling resources to cope with the increasingly difficult financial aspects of living independently. Those who still maintain a more traditional path "from the family of origin to the family of reproduction" have seen how the delay in union formation has resulted in a prolongation of the dependence period.

Given the novelty of some of this processes it might be the case that most educated individuals are leading the change in living arrangements and the emerging patterns will become predominant through imitation and diffusion, although no signs have been observed to date.

While the adoption of non-family living arrangements indicates the existence of different cultural preferences, the role of parental support in the process remains to be elucidated. What would be interesting to know as well is how the postponement of the formation of new households is affecting the flow of intergenerational transfers. In fact, for some families, the prolonged stay of some its members might represent a viable economic alternative more than a burden, if different generations pool their resources to the maintenance of a common household.

The situation describe in this study may not be problematic if we consider that the great majority still manages to "leave home" by age 40. However, the increasing difficulties in the formation of a new household coupled with the limited capacity of families to absorb the costs of a protracted transition to adulthood are most likely one of the causes behind the increased emigration rates of young people in the last 10 years. For a growing number of Uruguayans, the decision to complete the transition elsewhere has become an alternative strategy in the context of denied independence.

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