Galactic conformity at few Mpc scales

Ivan Lacerna,1,2⋆ Facundo Rodriguez,3,4 Antonio D. Montero-Dorta,5 Ana L. O’Mill,3,4 Sofía A. Cora,6,7 M. Celeste Artale,8,9 Andrés N. Ruiz,3,4 Tomás Hough6 and Cristian A. Vega-Martínez10,11

1 Instituto de Astronomía y Ciencias Planetarias, Universidad de Atacama, Copiapó 485, Copiapó, Chile
2 Millennium Institute of Astrophysics, Nuncio Monsenor Sotero Sanz 100, Of. 104, Providencia, Santiago, Chile
3 Instituto de Astronomía Teórica y Experimental, CONICET-UNC, Laprida 854, X5000BGR, Córdoba, Argentina
4 Observatorio Astronómico de Córdoba, UNC, Laprida 854, X5000BGR, Córdoba, Argentina.
5 Departamento de Física, Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, Casilla 110-V, Avda. España 1680, Valparaíso, Chile
6 Instituto de Astrofísica de La Plata (CCT La Plata, CONICET, UNLP), Observatorio Astronómico, Paseo del Bosque B1900FWA, La Plata, Argentina
7 Facultad de Ciencias Astronómicas y Geofísicas, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Observatorio Astronómico, Paseo del Bosque, B1900FWA La Plata, Argentina
8 Institut für Astro- und Teilchenphysik, Universität Innsbruck, Technikerstraße 25/8, A-6020 Innsbruck, Austria
9 Department of Physics and Astronomy, Purdue University, 525 Northwestern Avenue, West Lafayette, IN 47907, USA
10 Instituto de Investigación Multidisciplinar en Ciencia y Tecnología, Universidad de La Serena, Raúl Bitrán 1905, La Serena, Chile
11 Departamento de Astronomía, Universidad de La Serena, Av. Juan Cisternas 1200 Norte, La Serena, Chile

ABSTRACT

The environment within dark matter haloes can quench the star formation of galaxies. However, environmental effects beyond the virial radius of haloes (≳1 Mpc) are less evident. An example is the debated correlation between colour or star formation in central galaxies and neighbour galaxies in adjacent haloes at large separations of several Mpc, referred to as two-halo galactic conformity. We use two galaxy catalogues generated from different versions of the semi-analytic model SAG applied to the MDPL2 cosmological simulation and the IllustrisTNG300 cosmological hydrodynamical simulation to study the two-halo conformity by measuring the quenched fraction of neighbouring galaxies as a function of the real-space distance from central galaxies. We find that low-mass central galaxies in the vicinity of massive systems (M200c ≥ 10¹³ h⁻¹ M☉) out to 5 h⁻¹ Mpc are preferentially quenched compared to other central galaxies at fixed stellar mass M⋆ or fixed host halo mass M200c at z ~ 0. In all the galaxies catalogues is consistent that the low-mass (M⋆ < 10¹⁰ h⁻¹ M☉ or M200c < 10¹¹.8 h⁻¹ M☉) central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters of galaxies mostly produce the two-halo galactic conformity. On average, the quenched low-mass central galaxies are typically much closer to massive haloes than star-forming central galaxies of the same mass (by a factor of ~ 5). Our results support that the environmental influence of massive haloes can extend beyond the virial radius and affect nearby low-mass central galaxies.

Key words: galaxies: general – galaxies: haloes – galaxies: star formation – galaxies: groups: general – galaxies: clusters: general – galaxies: statistics

1 INTRODUCTION

The description of the dependence of the physical properties of galaxies on their environment is paramount to understand galaxy formation. Galaxies residing within groups and clusters are strongly affected by different processes that modify their gas content, e.g., ram-pressure stripping (Gunn & Gott 1972; Giovanelli & Haynes 1985; Aragon-Salamanca et al. 1993; Solanes et al. 2001; Cortese et al. 2011; Gavazzi et al. 2018; Lin et al. 2019; Roberts et al. 2019; Schaefer et al. 2019), starvation or “strangulation” (Larson, Tinsley & Caldwell 1980; McCarthy et al. 2008; Peng, Maiolino & Cochrane 2015; Spindler et al. 2018; Garling et al. 2020), and

⋆ E-mail: ivan.lacerna@uda.cl
high-speed galaxy encounters or ‘galaxy harassment’ (Moore et al. 1996; Moore, Lake & Katz 1998; Lin et al. 2010).

Interest on environmental effects at large scales (>1 Mpc), typically well beyond the virial radius of galaxy groups and clusters, has increased in the last few years (e.g., Benítez-Llambay et al. 2013; Cybulski et al. 2014; Campbell et al. 2015; Hearin, Watson & van den Bosch 2013; Berti et al. 2017; Goddard et al. 2017; Sin, Lilly & Henriques 2017; Zheng et al. 2017; Duckworth et al. 2019; Pallero et al. 2019; Zheng et al. 2019; Kračič et al. 2019; Pandey & Sarkar 2020; Zhang, Yang & Guo 2021). The effect of the large-scale environment on massive galaxies is less strong than the effect of mass (e.g., Alpaslan et al. 2015), but seems to play a role in less massive galaxies (Peng et al. 2010; Bluck et al. 2014; Argudo-Fernández, Lacerna & Duarte Puertas 2018). The minimum role of the large-scale environment at higher masses is likely due to the dominant presence of active galactic nuclei (AGN) feedback in these galaxies (e.g., Bower et al. 2006; Hirschmann et al. 2013; Bluck et al. 2016; Guo et al. 2019). Environmental effects depend also on the orbital evolution of galaxies. Galaxies found beyond the virial radius of the cluster (1–2 Mpc from the cluster center) might be recent infallers or galaxies that have passed once near the cluster center, where environmental effects are stronger, and are in their way out of the cluster. Galaxies that experienced the latter phenomenon are known as “backsplash” galaxies (Gill, Knebe & Gibson 2005; Pimbblet 2011; Muriel & Cendes 2014; Haggar et al. 2020). About 60 per cent of galaxies in the region between one and two virial radii around a galaxy cluster would be backsplash galaxies (Haggar et al. 2020).

A remarkable case of the effect of the environment at different scales is galactic conformity (e.g., Weinmann et al. 2006; Kauffmann et al. 2003; Phillips et al. 2014; Kauffmann et al. 2015; Knobel et al. 2015; Paranjape et al. 2015; Bray et al. 2016; Lee et al. 2016; Sin, Lilly & Henriques 2017; Calderon, Berlind & Sinha 2018; Lacerna et al. 2018; Raheriantsoa & Dave 2018; Sun et al. 2018; Tinker et al. 2018; Trever et al. 2018; Zu & Mandelbaum 2018; Sin, Lilly & Henriques 2019; Alam et al. 2020; Otter et al. 2020; Li et al. 2021). This term is used to describe the observed correlation between colour or star formation activity in central galaxies and their satellite galaxies. Observationally, central galaxies usually reside in the centre of galaxy groups or clusters; theoretically, they reside near the centre of the potential well of host dark matter haloes. Weinmann et al. (2006) defined the term of galactic conformity after finding that quenched central galaxies have a higher fraction of quenched satellite galaxies compared to star-forming central galaxies in galaxy groups of similar mass at z < 0.05. Later, Kauffmann et al. (2013) found a galactic conformity effect between low-mass central galaxies with low specific star formation rate (sSFR) or gas content and neighbour galaxies with low sSFR out to scales of 4 Mpc at z < 0.03. These results motivated the distinction between the conformity measured at small separations between the central galaxy and their satellite galaxies within a dark matter halo and the signal measured at large separations of several Mpc between the central galaxy and neighbour galaxies in adjacent haloes. The former case is referred to as one-halo conformity, while the latter one is called two-halo conformity.

Cosmological hydrodynamical simulations (e.g., Bray et al. 2016), semi-analytic models of galaxy formation (e.g., Lacerna et al. 2018), and mock galaxy catalogues (e.g., Sin, Lilly & Henriques 2017; Tinker et al. 2018) show a correlation in colour or star formation between central (primary) galaxies and neighbour (secondary) galaxies at Mpc scales, i.e., two-halo conformity. However, the signal is smaller compared to observations because the latter use isolation criteria to select primary galaxies that include a small fraction of satellite galaxies. The overall two-halo conformity decreases when only central galaxies are considered in the selection of the primaries (Bray et al. 2016; Sin, Lilly & Henriques 2017; Lacerna et al. 2018; Tinker et al. 2018). Furthermore, Sin, Lilly & Henriques (2017) found that the two-halo conformity out to projected distances of 3–4 Mpc from central galaxies in mock catalogues is primarily related to the environmental influence of very large neighbouring haloes. Lacerna et al. (2018) found that the two-halo conformity is only detected for central galaxies in relatively low-mass haloes (M_halo ≲ 10^{12.4} h^{-1} M_{⊙}) and it has been shown that relatively massive haloes could disrupt the average growth of near smaller objects (e.g., Wang, Mo & Jing 2007; Dalal et al. 2008; Hahn et al. 2009) and, therefore, affect their properties (e.g., Lacerna & Padilla 2011; Salcedo et al. 2018). Thus, the two-halo conformity may result from galaxies hosted by low-mass haloes affected by nearby massive systems.

In this paper, we use cosmological numerical simulations to answer if, in addition to the hostile environment within groups and galaxy clusters, synthetic galaxies are quenched preferentially in the infall region around dense and massive structures at fixed stellar mass or fixed halo mass in the local Universe. For this, we study whether the two-halo conformity at a few Mpc scales is given by central galaxies in the vicinity of galaxy groups and galaxy clusters.

The outline of the paper is as follows. Section 2 describes the cosmological simulations and synthetic galaxy catalogues used in this paper. The methodology to measure galactic conformity is presented in Section 3. The results with the correlations of sSFR and colour are shown in Section 4. We discuss our results in Section 5 and the conclusions are given in Section 6.

Throughout this paper, the reduced Hubble constant, h, is defined as H_0 = 100 h \, \text{km s}^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}^{-1}, with the following dependencies, unless the explicit value of h is specified: stellar mass and halo mass in h^{-1} M_{⊙}, physical scale in h^{-1} Mpc, and sSFR in h^{-1} yr^{-1}.

### 2 COSMOLOGICAL SIMULATIONS

We use cosmological numerical simulations of big volume that contain a large number of galaxy groups and clusters to obtain statistically significant results, and with a good mass resolution to sample galaxies with stellar masses above \( 7 \times 10^8 h^{-1} M_\odot \), as well. We study the conformity at a few Mpc scales using different galaxy catalogues: two generated by applying a semi-analytic model (SAM) of galaxy formation and evolution to a large \( N \)-body simulation of dark matter (Sect. 2.1), and other extracted from a cosmological hydrodynamical simulation (Sect. 2.2).

It is worth noticing that the scope of this paper is not to compare results from SAMs and hydrodynamical simulations, but to study a possible excess of correlation in star
formation and colour out to scales of few Mpc as a result of the presence of central galaxies in the vicinity of relatively massive systems using different types of galaxy formation models.

2.1 SAG galaxy catalogues

We analyse two galaxy catalogues generated by applying the SAM sag to the dark matter only MultiDark Planck 2 (MDPL2) cosmological simulation (Klypin et al. 2016; Knebe et al. 2018). The model sag originates from the SAM described in Springel et al. (2001b) and was subsequently modified as detailed in Cora (2006), Lagos, Cora & Padilla (2008), Tecce et al. (2010), Orsi et al. (2014), Munoz Arancibia et al. (2015), Gargiulo et al. (2015) and Cora et al. (2018): the latter work presents the latest version of the model. The MDPL2 has a huge volume of (1 h⁻¹ Gpc)³ and dark matter mass resolution of 1.5 × 10⁶ h⁻¹ M☉. It is consistent with a flat ΛCDM model characterized by Planck cosmological parameters: Ωₐ₀ = 0.307, Ωₐ₀ = 0.693, Ωₐ₀ = 0.048, n_s = 0.96 and H₀ = 100 h⁻¹ km s⁻¹ Mpc⁻¹, where h = 0.678 (Planck Collaboration et al. 2014). Dark matter haloes have been identified with the ROCKSTAR halo finder (Behroozi, Wechsler & Wu 2013), and merger trees were constructed with ConsistentTrees (Behroozi et al. 2013).

The halo catalogues and merger trees constitute the input of the model sag which assigns one galaxy to each new detected halo in the simulation to generate the galaxy population. Central galaxies reside within main host haloes detected over the background density. Those haloes lying within another dark matter halo are subhaloes and contain satellite galaxies. Those galaxies that are assigned to dark matter subhaloes that are no longer identified by the halo finder (either because they have been disrupted by tidal effects or merged with the main host halo, or simply because of resolution effects of the underlying simulation) are called orphan satellites, and their orbital evolution is tracked semi-analytically in a pre-processing step before applying sag to the dark matter only simulation (Cora et al. 2018; Delfino et al. 2021).

The evolution of galaxy properties is tracked by sag considering a set of physical processes that regulates the circulation of mass and metals among the different baryonic components of the galaxy (hot gas halo, gaseous and stellar discs, stellar bulge), namely, radiative cooling of the hot halo gas, star formation (quiescent and in starbursts triggered by mergers and disc instabilities), chemical enrichment produced by stellar winds and different types of supernovae, feedback from supernovae and from active galactic nuclei, and environmental effects such as tidal stripping and ram pressure stripping. In particular, the value of ram pressure at the radial position of the satellite galaxies is obtained from an analytic profile that depends on halo mass and redshift, obtained by fitting the information provided by hydrodynamical simulations of groups and clusters of galaxies (Vega-Martínez et al. 2021). Ram pressure exerted over satellite galaxies removes their hot gas gradually after infall. When the ratio between the hot gas mass and the baryonic mass of a satellite decreases below 0.1, ram pressure can strip gas from the galaxy disc. The implementations of all these processes involve free parameters that have been calibrated to a set of observed relations of galaxy properties by using the Particle Swarm Optimisation technique (Ruiz et al. 2015).

The two galaxy catalogues used in this study have been generated with the version of sag previously described, and differ only in the value of the parameter β involved in the explicit redshift dependence of the reheated and ejected mass by supernovae feedback (see equation 10 and 12 of Cora et al. 2018), which is based on relations measured from full-physics hydrodynamical simulations. One of the catalogues is characterized by a value given by the calibration process (β = 1.99), while the other was generated by adopting a smaller value (β = 1.3) in order to achieve better consistency with the observational trends followed by the fraction of local passive satellites as a function of stellar mass, halo mass, and the halo-centric distances (Cora et al. 2018). However, the larger value of β allows to reproduce the evolution of the mass-metallicity relation of galaxies in the redshift range 0 < z < 3.5 (Collacchioni et al. 2018). We refer to the galaxy catalogues with the larger and smaller values of β as MD_SAG and SAG13.3, respectively.

The MD_SAG galaxy catalogue contains about 370,000 galaxy groups and clusters with M₂₀₀c ≥ 10¹³ h⁻¹ M☉, where M₂₀₀c is the dark matter halo mass within a radius that contains a mean density of 200 times the critical density of the Universe, and about 40 million galaxies with stellar mass above 7 × 10⁸ h⁻¹ M☉. This catalogue includes relevant physical parameters such as the stellar mass, SFR, ugriz magnitudes, bulge-to-total stellar mass ratio, and the distinction between central and satellite galaxies. The sSFR and g−r colour distributions as functions of the stellar mass are shown in the left column of Fig. 1 for all galaxies (centrals and satellites) in the MD_SAG catalogue. Similar distributions are obtained for the galaxies in the SAG13.3 catalogue (not shown). Although the fraction of quenched galaxies is in better agreement with observational measurements in the latter case, as already mentioned, we decided to show the results of our analysis for both the MD_SAG and SAG13.3 catalogues, since the former is publicly available (Knebe et al. 2018) and allows the reproducibility of our results.

2.2 The IllustrisTNG300 hydrodynamical simulation

Cosmological hydrodynamical simulations have the benefit of providing predictions that are less model-dependent than those coming from SAMs, because they follow the evolution of dark matter particles, gas cells, and stellar particles simultaneously in a self-consistent way. Therefore, we also use the IllustrisTNG simulation (Nelson et al. 2018; Marinacci et al. 2018; Pillepich et al. 2018b; Springel et al. 2018). Among the different boxes, we choose

1 The orbital evolution model described in Delfino et al. (2021) considers a NFW density profile (Navarro, Frenk & White 1997) for both the host halo and the unresolved subhalo. Here, a previous version of the model is used assuming an isothermal density profile for both cases.

2 The catalogue is accessible from the CosmoSim database http://www.cosmosim.org/
ILLUSTRIS-TNG300, which is one of the largest magneto-hydrodynamical cosmological simulations available, with a side length of 205 $h^{-1}$ Mpc. The ILLUSTRIS-TNG300 simulation adopts the standard ΛCDM cosmology [Planck Collaboration et al. 2016], with parameters $\Omega_m = 0.3089$, $\Omega_b = 0.0486$, $\Omega_{\Lambda} = 0.6911$, $H_0 = 100 h \text{ km s}^{-1} \text{ Mpc}^{-1}$ with $h = 0.6774$, $\sigma_8 = 0.8159$, and $n_s = 0.9667$. It follows the evolution of $2500^3$ dark-matter particles of mass $4.0 \times 10^7$ $h^{-1}$ $M_{\odot}$, and $2500^3$ gas cells with a mass of $7.6 \times 10^6$ $h^{-1}$ $M_{\odot}$. ILLUSTRIS-TNG300 contains about 4000 galaxy groups and galaxy clusters with masses between $10^{13} \lesssim M_{200c}/h^{-1} M_{\odot} \lesssim 10^{15}$, and about 500 galaxy clusters between $10^{14} \lesssim M_{200c}/h^{-1} M_{\odot} \lesssim 10^{15}$ [Pillepich et al. 2018a].

The ILLUSTRIS-TNG simulation suite was built using the AREPO moving-mesh code [Springel 2010] and is regarded as an improved version of its predecessor, the ILLUSTRIS simulation [Vogelsberger et al. 2014a; Genel et al. 2014]. Its updated sub-grid models account for a variety of physical processes, including star formation, radiative metal cooling, chemical enrichment from Type II and Type Ia supernovae (SNe) events, and asymptotic giant branch (AGB) stars, stellar feedback, and super-massive black hole feedback (see Weinberger et al. 2017; Pillepich et al. 2018b for more details). Importantly, these models were specifically calibrated to reproduce important observational constraints such as the observed $z = 0$ galaxy stellar mass function, the cosmic SFR density, the halo gas fraction, the galaxy stellar size distributions, or the black hole – galaxy mass relation.

As for dark matter haloes, these objects are defined in ILLUSTRIS-TNG using a friends-of-friends (FOF) algorithm with a linking length of 0.2 times the mean inter-particle separation [Davis et al. 1985]. The gravitationally bound substructures that we call subhaloes are in turn identified using the SUBFIND algorithm [Springel et al. 2001a; Dolag et al. 2009]. In ILLUSTRIS-TNG, all subhaloes containing a non-zero stellar mass component are labelled galaxies.

The IllustrisTNG simulation has been an excellent tool for studying the connection between galaxies and dark matter haloes at small and large scales. Among others, it has been implemented to study the occupancy variations (Bose et al. 2019; Hadzhiyska et al. 2020), the impact of secondary halo properties on the galaxy population (Montero-Dorta et al. 2020; Contreras, Angulo & Zennaro 2020; Favole et al. 2021; Montero-Dorta et al. 2021), and the galaxy size re-
lation of satellite and central galaxies with their host dark matter haloes (Rodriguez et al. 2021). The distributions of the sSFR and \(g-r\) colour as functions of the stellar mass in the IllustrisTNG300 simulation are shown in the right panels of Fig. 1.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

There are different ways to measure correlations of galaxy properties between central and neighbouring galaxies. For example, Kauffmann et al. (2013) measured the sSFR of neighbouring galaxies around isolated galaxies, as observational proxies of central galaxies, as a function of the projected distance from the central galaxies at a given stellar mass bin. This approach has also been used in mock catalogues (e.g. Sin, Lilly & Henriques 2017; Tinker et al. 2018). Another approach is to estimate the mean red fraction or mean quenched fraction of neighbouring (secondary) galaxies as a function of the distance from the central (primary) galaxies in stellar mass bins of the centrals. In simulations, the distance is estimated in real space (e.g. Bray et al. 2016; Lacerna et al. 2018). Here, we use the latter approach.

We focus on the results obtained directly from the boxes of the simulations at \(z \sim 0\). In this way, we can make assessments of the results under ideal conditions in the simulations. Galaxies with stellar mass \(M_*>7\times10^8\, h^{-1}\, M_\odot\) in the samples built from the SAG model and the IllustrisTNG300 simulation are classified according to sSFR, \(g-r\) colour, stellar mass bins, and halo mass \(M_{\text{halo}}\) bins. By establishing a cut or threshold in sSFR and colour, we can select the galaxies with quenched star formation and red colours.

We refer to a galaxy as quenched if the sSFR \(\leq 10^{-10.5}\, h\, \text{yr}^{-1}\), whereas galaxies with sSFR above this value are considered as star-forming galaxies (e.g., see the dashed line in the top panels of Fig. 1). The chosen value in sSFR is based on Brown et al. (2017) for selecting star-forming galaxies. Cora et al. (2018) found that this cut in sSFR \(10^{-10.7}\, \text{yr}^{-1}\) with \(h=0.678\) allows a better separation between star-forming and quiescent galaxies in the SAG model than other cuts commonly used in the literature, e.g. sSFR = \(10^{-11}\, \text{yr}^{-1}\) (Wetzel, Tinker & Conroy 2012). We opted for using the same cut in sSFR for the IllustrisTNG300 galaxy catalogue for consistency, avoiding biased results for particular cuts in each catalogue. We obtain a fraction of quenched galaxies of 14 per cent for the MD-SAG galaxy catalogue, 17 per cent for the SAG1.3 one, and 38 per cent for the IllustrisTNG300 simulation. Although the fraction of quenched galaxies is smaller in the SAG galaxy catalogues compared to the IllustrisTNG300 one, the top panels of Fig. 1 show that both MD-SAG and IllustrisTNG300 models have a similar concentration of star-forming galaxies using this cut in sSFR.

Likewise, we refer to a galaxy as red if \(g-r\geq 0.65\), whereas galaxies with colours below this value are considered blue galaxies (e.g., see the dashed line in the bottom panels of Fig. 1). We selected this colour cut from the bi-modality in the MD-SAG galaxy catalogue (bottom left panel in Fig. 1). The chosen value is in rough agreement with the separation between the red sequence and the blue cloud in the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS) galaxies (e.g. Blanton & Moustakas 2009). We obtain a fraction of red galaxies of 12 per cent for the MD-SAG catalogue. Again, we opted for using the same cut in colour for the other galaxy catalogues for consistency. The fraction of red galaxies is 15 per cent for SAG1.3 and 31 per cent for IllustrisTNG300 catalogues. Although the fractions of red galaxies are different between the SAG galaxy catalogues and the IllustrisTNG300 one, their colour distributions are similar, in general. They show a blue cloud and the red sequence, separated by the chosen colour cut.

With the distinction of central and satellite galaxies as defined by the corresponding halo finders of each available catalogue, we can measure the mean quenched fraction \(f_Q\) or the mean red fraction \(f_r\) of neighbouring (secondary) galaxies around central (primary) galaxies at fixed mass to assess the galactic conformity. The neighbouring galaxies are all the galaxies (centrals and satellites) out to a real-space distance of \(10\, h^{-1}\, \text{Mpc}\) from the central galaxies in each sample of primary galaxies. To measure the galactic conformity at a given distance, we estimate the mean fractions of quenched (red) neighbouring galaxies around both quenched (red) and star-forming (blue) primary galaxies at fixed stellar or halo mass and calculate the difference between these fractions, \(\Delta f_Q (\Delta f_r)\). If the difference is close to zero, there is no correlation between the sSFR or color of central galaxies and their neighbouring galaxies, i.e., there is no conformity. Therefore, the bigger is the difference, the larger is the galactic conformity.

We will refer to the primary sample with all the central galaxies at fixed mass as ‘PrimAll’. The conformity signal with the ‘PrimAll’ sample is the fiducial case of two-halo conformity measured in simulations and observations. We then repeat the same procedure, but removing central galaxies in the vicinity around massive systems of \(M_{\text{halo}}\geq 10^{13}\, h^{-1}\, M_\odot\) out to \(5\, h^{-1}\, \text{Mpc}\), a scale that is typically outside of filament spines (Kuutma, Tamm & Tempel 2017). These central galaxies are only removed from the primary sample. The secondary sample of neighbouring galaxies out \(10\, h^{-1}\, \text{Mpc}\) of each remaining primary galaxy is the same. We will refer to this primary sample that does not include central galaxies around clusters (AC) or groups as ‘PrimNotAC’. The analysis of samples ‘PrimAll’ and ‘PrimNotAC’ will allow us to establish the contribution of central galaxies located around massive systems on the two-halo conformity signal measured at separations of several Mpc. An excess of conformity signal at few Mpc scales by considering all the central galaxies in ‘PrimAll’ with respect to the signal corresponding to the case ‘PrimNotAC’ will confirm that the two-halo conformity, i.e., correlations of star formation or colour between central galaxies and neighbouring galaxies beyond the virial radius of virialized structures, can be explained mainly by the presence of central galaxies in the outskirts of rich galaxy groups and clusters.

The errors in the estimation of the mean fractions for the SAG catalogues are calculated using the jackknife method.

---

3 We will estimate the mean fractions of neighbouring galaxies for separations between \(0.6\, h^{-1}\, \text{Mpc}\) out to \(10\, h^{-1}\, \text{Mpc}\) from the primary galaxies, but we will discuss the results for scales \(r\geq 1\, h^{-1}\, \text{Mpc}\) because we are interested in the two-halo conformity. At smaller scales, the conformity signal might be mixed with that from the one-halo conformity.
4 RESULTS

4.1 Conformity with sSFR

Figure 2 shows the mean quenched fractions of neighbouring galaxies as functions of the distance from the primary galaxies in two stellar-mass bins in the MD_SAG catalogue. The solid lines correspond to all the central galaxies in the primary sample, ‘PrimAll’. The mean quenched fraction ($f_Q$) is higher around quenched central galaxies (dark red solid line) compared with that around star-forming centrals (navy blue solid line), especially at distances between ~0.7 and 3 $h^{-1}$ Mpc from low-mass central galaxies (top panels). Both fractions tend to converge to the overall fraction of quenched galaxies of this catalogue at large scales about 10 $h^{-1}$ Mpc. The sub-panels of Fig. 2 show the difference between both mean quenched fractions ($\Delta f_Q$) as a function of the distance from the central galaxies for the same stellar mass bins (solid lines). The difference is as big as $\Delta f_Q \sim 0.15$ at ~1 $h^{-1}$ Mpc for low-mass primary galaxies of $10^{9.7} < M_h / h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$, and declines to $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.05$ at distances $r \geq 3$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc. For primary galaxies of $10^{10.3} < M_h / h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.5}$, the difference in the quenched fractions of neighbours is always smaller than 0.02. This result confirms that the two-halo conformity is much stronger for low-mass central galaxies (e.g. Kauffmann et al. 2013; Bray et al. 2016; Lacerna et al. 2018).

For the sample ‘PrimNotAC’, in which the central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters of galaxies are removed from the primary sample, the mean quenched fraction is slightly higher around quenched central galaxies compared with that around star-forming centrals (red and blue dashed lines in Fig. 2 respectively). The mean quenched fractions in ‘PrimNotAC’ increase to converge the overall fraction of quenched galaxies of this catalogue from distances $\gtrsim 5$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc because of the spatial condition in which we remove the centrals in the vicinity of massive structures. The sub-panels of Fig. 2 show the differences in the quenched fractions (dashed line). These differences are much smaller than the case ‘PrimAll’ of the same stellar mass, with $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.02$ for scales $r \gtrsim 1$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc in both stellar mass bins. The excess of two-halo conformity at fixed stellar mass in ‘PrimAll’ compared with the case ‘PrimNotAC’ supports the claim that most of the conformity signal at few Mpc scales can mainly be explained by the central galaxies in the outskirts of rich galaxy groups and clusters.

---

4 We arbitrarily chose those stellar mass bins to remark results for low-mass central galaxies $M_h < 10^{10} h^{-1} M_\odot$ and for intermediate-mass central galaxies with $M_h \sim 10^{10.4} h^{-1} M_\odot$. We confirmed that the results for central galaxies between these two $M_h$ bins correspond to a transition in the conformity signal shown in the two panels of Figure 2. The latter is also valid for the other galaxy catalogues used in this paper.
The results above assume that the correlations in sSFR between central and neighbouring galaxies are given by the stellar mass of the primary galaxies, as the resulting two-halo conformity is stronger for low-mass primary galaxies. However, central galaxies of the same stellar mass may reside in host dark matter haloes of different masses. Fig. 9 shows the same exercise as before but for primary galaxies at fixed halo mass. We find qualitatively the same results as for primary galaxies at fixed stellar mass, i.e., there is an excess of correlation between quenched neighbouring galaxies and quenched primary galaxies out to several Mpc distances in the case ‘PrimAll’ (solid lines) compared with the case ‘PrimNotAC’ (dashed lines). The correlation is stronger for primary galaxies in lower mass haloes, but it is drastically reduced for the case in which the central galaxies in the vicinity of galaxy groups and clusters are removed from the primary sample at fixed halo mass. For instance, for primary galaxies at $10^{11.4} \leq M_{200c}/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{11.6}$, the difference of the mean quenched fractions of neighbours is $\Delta f_Q \sim 0.16$ (0.1) at $r \sim 1$ (2) $h^{-1}$ Mpc from the primary galaxies in the case ‘PrimAll’, but it is $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.02$ at scales $r \gtrsim 1$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc from primary galaxies in the case ‘PrimNotAC’ with the same host halo mass. For primary galaxies at intermediate halo masses ($10^{12} \leq M_{200c}/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{12.2}$, bottom panel), both cases ‘PrimAll’ and ‘PrimNotAC’ show $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.02$ at distances $r \gtrsim 1$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc. Therefore, the conformity measured at few Mpc scales is largely driven by low-mass central galaxies or central galaxies in low-mass haloes located in the outskirts of galaxy groups and galaxy clusters.

We now repeat the same test but using the SAG$_{11.3}$ galaxy catalogue. The results at fixed stellar mass for the primary galaxies are shown in Fig. 9. The trends are very similar to those obtained from the MD$_{SAG}$ catalogue (Fig. 2). We added another massive stellar-mass bin (bottom panel) for further qualitative comparison with the IllustrisTNG300 model. For the case ‘PrimAll’ (solid lines), the two-halo conformity in the SAG$_{11.3}$ model is more evident at low stellar mass ($10^{9.7} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$, top panel), with a difference in the mean quenched fractions of neighbours around quenched and star-forming primary galaxies of $\Delta f_Q \sim 0.19$ at $r \sim 1$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc, and it reduces to $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.06$ at distances $r \gtrsim 3$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc from the primary galaxies (black solid line). The two-halo conformity is smaller for more massive primary galaxies, with $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.03$ and $\lesssim 0.02$ for distances $\gtrsim 3$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc from the primary galaxies at $10^{10.3} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.5}$ and $10^{10.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.7}$ (middle and bottom panels, respectively). In contrast, $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.02$ at distances $\gtrsim 1$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc when the low-mass central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters are removed from the primary sample, ‘PrimNotAC’ (black dashed line in the top panel). The latter is also valid for the other two stellar-mass bins sampled in Fig. 9. Therefore, the conformity reduces almost one order of magnitude at $r \sim 1$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc and a factor of three at $r \sim 3$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc in the case ‘PrimNotAC’ for low-mass primary galaxies in the SAG$_{11.3}$ model.

The modelling of the physical processes that affect the baryonic components implemented in the IllustrisTNG300 hydrodynamical simulation differs from the treatment included in the semi-analytic model from which the galaxy catalogues MD$_{SAG}$ and SAG$_{11.3}$ are built. Furthermore, the number of synthetic galaxies in IllustrisTNG300 is much larger than the number of galaxies in the semi-analytic model.
Figure 4. Similar as Fig. 2 but for primary galaxies at fixed stellar mass in the SAG31.3 galaxy catalogue (from top to bottom: \(10^{9.7} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}, 10^{10.3} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.5}, \) and \(10^{10.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.7} \)).

TRISTNG300 is smaller compared with the SAG catalogues due to the different volume sizes of each simulation. Therefore, the results obtained from ILLUSTRIS TNG300 are shown in larger stellar-mass ranges. The case with all the central galaxies, "PrimAll", is shown in Fig. 5 as solid lines. For the lowest stellar mass bin \(10^{9.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10} \) (top panels), there is evident two-halo conformity out to \(r \sim 5 h^{-1} \) Mpc in which the quenched fraction of neighbouring galaxies is higher around quenched primary galaxies (dark red solid line) than that around primary star-forming galaxies (navy blue solid line) at a fixed distance and stellar mass. The difference in the mean quenched fractions of neighbours around low-mass quenched and low-mass star-forming primary galaxies is \(\Delta f_Q \sim 0.24\) at \(r \sim 1 h^{-1} \) Mpc and it reduces to \(\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.05\) at distances \(r \gtrsim 5 h^{-1} \) Mpc from the primary galaxies (black solid line in the sub-panel). In contrast, we do not observe a particular correlation with sSFR between the more massive primary galaxies of \(10^{10.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{11}\) and their neighbouring galaxies (bottom panels). The difference in the mean quenched fractions of neighbours around quenched and star-forming primary galaxies is typically \(\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.04\) at distances \(\gtrsim 1 h^{-1} \) Mpc from the intermediate-mass primary galaxies (black solid line in the sub-panel).

Figure 5 also shows the mean quenched fractions of neighbours in the case 'PrimNotAC' (dashed lines). Likewise the SAMs, the two-halo conformity is very small or absent in this case. For the lowest \(M_*/\) bin, \(10^{9.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}\), the difference in the mean quenched fractions of neighbours around quenched and star-forming primary galaxies in the case 'PrimNotAC' is typical \(\Delta f_Q < 0.04\) at distances larger than \(1 h^{-1} \) Mpc from the low-mass primary galaxies (black dashed line in the sub-panel). A similar result is obtained for the other massive bin (bottom panels), which resembles the small conformity signal of the fiducial case "PrimAll" in this bin. Therefore, it is a robust result that the conformity measured at few Mpc scales is mainly driven by low-mass central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters because it is independent of the specific model.

4.2 Conformity with \(g - r\) colour

In this section, we explore the two-halo conformity trends using the \(g - r\) colour. Fig. 6 shows the mean red fractions of neighbouring galaxies as functions of the distance from the primary galaxies in two stellar mass bins in the MD_SAG galaxy catalogue. The solid lines correspond to the case 'PrimAll'. At a fixed distance from the primary galaxies, the fraction of red neighbours is higher around red primary galaxies compared with the fraction of red neighbours around blue primary galaxies of the same stellar mass. The correlation in the red colour between neighbours and primary galaxies at distances of a few Mpc is stronger for low-mass primaries \((10^{9.7} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10})\), in which the differences in the mean fractions are bigger compared with primaries at intermediate masses \((10^{10.3} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.5})\). These results are qualitatively very similar to those obtained with the mean quenched fractions of neighbours around primary galaxies of the same stellar mass (Fig. 5). The differences in the mean red fractions of neighbours around red and blue primary galaxies, \(\Delta f_r\), are shown with black solid lines in the sub-panels. For the low-mass pri-
Galactic conformity at few Mpc scales

Figure 5. Same as Fig. 2 but for primary galaxies at fixed stellar mass in the IllustrisTNG300 model (from top to bottom: $10^{9.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$ and $10^{10.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{11}$).

Figure 6. Main panels: mean red fractions of neighbouring galaxies as functions of the (real-space) distance from the primary galaxies in two stellar mass bins ($10^{9.7} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$ and $10^{10.3} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.5}$) in the md_SAG simulation. The solid lines consider the case ‘PrimAll’ (dark red and navy blue for red and blue primary galaxies), whereas the dashed lines correspond to the case ‘PrimNotAC’ (red and blue for red and blue primary galaxies). Sub-panels: difference of the mean quenched fractions of neighbour galaxies around red and blue primary galaxies at fixed stellar mass. The x-axis is the distance from the primary galaxies. The solid and dashed lines consider the cases ‘PrimAll’ and ‘PrimNotAC’, respectively. The dotted line denotes the case of zero difference, i.e. no conformity.

The case ‘PrimNotAC’, in which we remove from the primary sample the central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters, is shown as dotted lines in Fig. 6. The mean red fractions of neighbours around red and blue primary galaxies decrease at relatively similar fractions in this case compared with ‘PrimAll’. The mean red fractions between both cases become more similar from distances $\geq 5 h^{-1}$ Mpc because of the spatial condition in which we remove the central galaxies in the vicinity of massive structures. The difference in the mean red fractions of the case ‘PrimNotAC’ is typical $\Delta f_r \lesssim 0.03$ at distances $\geq 1 h^{-1}$ Mpc from low-mass primary galaxies, and it is smaller for the intermediate-mass primary galaxies. For the low-mass primary galaxies, $\Delta f_r$ decreases a factor of $3-4$ at $2-3 h^{-1}$ Mpc in ‘PrimNotAC’ compared with ‘PrimAll’. The overall behaviour of the mean red fractions in the case ‘PrimNotAC’ is qualitatively very similar to the same case of the mean quenched fractions (dotted lines in Fig. 2). Therefore, the observed correlation in both colour and sSFR between low-mass central galaxies and neighbour galaxies at distances of a few Mpc is mainly driven by the central galaxies located in the outskirts of groups and clusters of galaxies.

The previous conclusion arises from considering the qualitatively similar results obtained from the md_SAG cata-
logue when using either sSFR of colour. Taking into account the remarkable similarity between the results obtained from the MD-SAG and SAG$_{31.3}$ models, and the IllustrisTNG300 simulation when considering the sSFR, it is reasonable to expect that the same trend is maintained in the SAG$_{31.3}$ and IllustrisTNG300 galaxy catalogues when considering colours. Indeed, this is the case, but we do not show such analysis here.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Two-halo conformity signal after removing central galaxies

We have shown in Sect. 4 that the conformity signal at few Mpc decreases drastically when the central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters with $M_{200c} \geq 10^{15} h^{-1} M_\odot$ are removed from the primary sample (‘PrimNotAC’). We explore how this signal depends on the halo mass threshold to exclude nearby central galaxies from the primary sample. Fig. 7 shows the mean quenched fractions of neighbours as functions of the distance from low-mass primary galaxies in the IllustrisTNG300 simulation after removing from the primary sample the central galaxies in the vicinity of haloes of different masses. The top panel shows the results for haloes more massive than $10^{13} h^{-1} M_\odot$, i.e., the lines show the same values as the dashed lines in the top panel of Fig. 5. The middle and bottom panels of Fig. 7 show the results obtained when we remove central galaxies in the vicinity of haloes more massive than $10^{13.5} h^{-1} M_\odot$ and $10^{14} h^{-1} M_\odot$, respectively. The two-halo conformity increases as the halo mass threshold of the systems increases, but the signal at distances $> 1 h^{-1} $ Mpc is always smaller than that for the case with all the central galaxies in the primary sample (‘PrimAll’ sample; solid lines in the top panel of Fig. 5). The importance of this result is that the two-halo conformity is not produced in the outskirts of galaxy clusters only; we also need to consider the environmental effects in the vicinity of galaxy groups as smaller as $10^{13} h^{-1} M_\odot$ on low-mass central galaxies to largely explain the conformity measured at distances of a few Mpc from the primary galaxies. We note we obtain the same results from the MD-SAG and SAG$_{31.3}$ catalogues.

We test if the results shown in Sect. 4 are robust or are just an artifact of removing galaxies. For this exercise, we did 50 realizations of removing randomly quenched and star-forming central galaxies from the primary sample in the IllustrisTNG300 simulation. The number of quenched and star-forming central galaxies removed randomly is similar to the case of removing quenched and star-forming central galaxies of the same stellar mass in the vicinity of haloes more massive than $10^{13} h^{-1} M_\odot$. ‘PrimNotAC’. Fig. 8 shows the mean quenched fractions of neighbouring galaxies out to $\sim 10 h^{-1} $ Mpc from low-mass primary galaxies ($10^{9.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$) for these realizations as solid lines. The results are different than the case ‘PrimNotAC’ shown in dashed lines, but they are similar compared with ‘PrimAll’ (see the solid lines in the top main panel of Fig. 5), i.e., the fiducial conformity signal in the sample ‘PrimAll’ remains after randomly removing central galaxies from the primary sample. This result supports our claim that most of the galactic conformity measured out to scales of a few Mpc is produced by low-mass central galaxies located near large groups and clusters of galaxies.

Figure 9 shows the same exercise of randomly removing quenched and star-forming central galaxies from the primary sample but for 64 realizations of the MD-SAG catalogue. Again, the number of quenched and star-forming central galaxies removed randomly is similar to the case of removing quenched and star-forming central galaxies of the same stellar mass in ‘PrimNotAC’, which corresponds to about 60 per cent of the central galaxies with $10^{9.7} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$. 
For simplicity, we estimate these realizations at a distance of \( \sim 2 \, h^{-1} \text{Mpc} \) from the low-mass primary galaxies, which are shown as diamonds in Fig. 9 because it is a scale of interest when comparing the samples ‘PrimAll’ and ‘PrimNotAC’ (also shown as solid and dashed lines). The quenched fraction of neighbours around quenched ‘PrimAll’ galaxies (dark red solid line) is very similar to that around quenched primary galaxies in which we removed a fraction of quenched central galaxies randomly (maroon diamonds). Likewise, the quenched fraction of neighbours around star-forming ‘PrimAll’ galaxies (navy blue solid line) is very similar to that around star-forming primary galaxies in which we removed a fraction of star-forming central galaxies randomly (medium blue diamonds). The agreement is not perfect because of the different binning performed for this exercise. Removing central galaxies randomly from the primary sample does not modify the quenched fractions of neighbours at distances of a few \( h^{-1} \) Mpc from the primary galaxies in ‘PrimAll’.

Therefore, the results shown in the previous section are not an artifact of removing central galaxies. The results from both SAMs and the hydrodynamic simulation are consistent, indicating that most of the galactic conformity measured at few Mpc scales is produced by low-mass central galaxies in the vicinity of large groups and clusters.

### 5.2 Two-halo conformity signal after varying the vicinity radius

We have considered a radius out to \( 5 \, h^{-1} \text{Mpc} \) as the scale of influence of massive systems of \( M_{200c} \geq 10^{13} \, h^{-1} \, M_{\odot} \), which is a scale that is typically outside of filament spines. Here, we test if the previous results are robust after varying this radius out to which we remove the central galaxies from the primary sample.

We test different vicinity radii starting from \( 1 \, h^{-1} \text{Mpc} \). We remove from the primary sample the central galaxies inside the vicinity radius of massive systems of \( M_{200c} \geq 10^{13} \, h^{-1} \, M_{\odot} \) and estimate the mean quenched fractions of neighbouring galaxies around the (remaining) primary galaxies at fixed halo mass. The results for primary galaxies in host dark matter haloes of \( 10^{11.6} \leq M_{200c}/h^{-1} \, M_{\odot} < 10^{11.8} \) are shown in Fig. 10. We chose this halo mass range because the fiducial case ‘PrimAll’ shows an evident two-halo conformity signal (see middle panel of Fig. 3). The difference in the mean quenched fractions of neighbouring galaxies, i.e., the conformity signal \( \Delta f_Q(r) \), typically decreases as the vicinity radius increases. For example, at a distance of \( r \sim 3 \, h^{-1} \text{Mpc} \) from the primary galaxies, the conformity signal \( \Delta f_Q(3) \) is nearly the same as for the case ‘PrimAll’ (black solid line) and the case of removing from the primary sam-
ple the central galaxies in the vicinity of haloes more massive than $10^{13} \, h^{-1} \, M_\odot$ within 1 and 3 $h^{-1}$ Mpc (pale magenta, green, and orange dashed lines), with $\Delta_fQ(3) \sim 0.06$. The conformity signal reduces down to $\Delta_fQ(3) \sim 0.04$ for the case of removing from the primary sample the central galaxies in the vicinity of relatively massive haloes within 4 $h^{-1}$ Mpc (purple dashed line). The conformity signal is $\Delta_fQ(3) \lesssim 0.03$ after removing from the primary sample the central galaxies in the vicinity of haloes more massive than $10^{13} \, h^{-1} \, M_\odot$ within 4.5 and 5 $h^{-1}$ Mpc (gold, pale cyan, and black dashed lines). Therefore, the conformity signal at few Mpc scales depends on the vicinity radius around relatively massive haloes. This result can be explained as the radial influence of haloes that depends on their mass, i.e., it is smaller for less massive groups and larger for more massive clusters. The choice of a relatively large vicinity radius of 5 $h^{-1}$ Mpc as the scale of influence of massive systems on nearby central galaxies is probably considering most of the relevant scales in which this effect has been acting. Zinger et al. (2018) find the star formation quenching via ‘starvation’ can occur in the outskirts of simulated galaxy clusters because their hot X-ray emitting intracluster medium can extend out to ~2–3 virial radii, which corresponds to median scales of 4–6 Mpc in their sample of clusters. Similarly, Ayromlou et al. (2021) find the quenched fraction of galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters is higher than in the field out to ~2–3 virial radii using a SAM. We have tested that $\Delta_fQ(r)$ values at distances $r \gtrsim 1 \, h^{-1}$ Mpc from the primary galaxies are similar for virial radii between 5 and 7 $h^{-1}$ Mpc, indicating that the environmental influence of massive systems on low-mass central galaxies would not reach scales much more extensive than 5 $h^{-1}$ Mpc in our galaxy catalogues. An exploratory analysis in which the vicinity radius varies with the halo mass or other halo properties of the groups and clusters will be presented elsewhere.

5.3 Central galaxies around overdensities

We have tested results from the ‘PrimNotAC’ sample, built by removing central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters from the primary sample. We have considered the halo mass to identify the central galaxies around massive systems. Observationally, it is not easy to infer the halo mass because one has to rely on group finder methods that may contain systematics in the halo mass estimation (e.g., Calderon, Berlind & Sinha 2018 Tinker 2020).

Here, we explore an alternative approach of using dense environments (overdensities) instead of massive haloes. Overdense systems have the advantage that they can be more easily identified in observations depending on the environmental definition. We use the $\Sigma N$ parameter, which is a simple estimator to measure the galaxy environment in observations (e.g., Dressler 1980 Aguerri, Méndez-Abreu & Corsin 2009 Dominguez et al. 2002 Nigoche-Netro et al. 2019), with the definition given in Nigoche-Netro et al. (2019), i.e., $\Sigma N = N/\pi d_N^2$, where $d_N$ is the (real-space) distance to the $N$th nearest neighbouring galaxy. We choose $N = 5$ to measure $\Sigma N$ for each central galaxy using all the galaxies above $7 \times 10^8 \, h^{-1} \, M_\odot$ in the SAGA1.3 galaxy catalogue. We then select the densest systems as proxies of the overdensities of interest. The number of selected overdensities is almost equal to the number of haloes with masses $M_{200c} \geq 10^{13} \, h^{-1} \, M_\odot$. Like in the sample ‘PrimNotAC’, we remove from the primary sample the central galaxies around overdensities (AOD) out to 5 $h^{-1}$ Mpc; we refer to this sample as ‘PrimNotAOD’. The results of the conformity for the ‘PrimNotAOD’ sample are shown in Fig. 11 as dashed-dotted lines. They are similar to the results obtained from the sample ‘PrimNotAC’ (also shown in this figure as dashed lines) for intermediate and massive primary galaxies (middle and bottom panels), but they are different at distances $r \lesssim 2 \, h^{-1}$ Mpc from the low-mass primary galaxies (top panels). The conformity signal is $\Delta_fQ \sim 0.14$ and 0.04 at scales of 1 and 2 $h^{-1}$ Mpc, respectively, when the low-mass central galaxies in the vicinity of overdensities are not considered in the primary sample, while $\Delta_fQ \lesssim 0.02$ at scales $\gtrsim 1 \, h^{-1}$ Mpc for the ‘PrimNotAC’ sample. Both cases are comparable for scales $r \gtrsim 2 \, h^{-1}$ Mpc, but the former always shows a slightly larger conformity signal than the latter. These results suggest that the environment around groups and clusters, defined by their halo mass, better characterizes conformity at a few Mpc than the environment around overdensities.

We also explore another definition of density environment. Instead of counting galaxies, we count subhaloes in the IllustrisTNG300 simulation, following the approach described in Artale et al. (2018), also implemented in Favole et al. (2021). We use this environmental definition because it is an independent method for selecting overdensities, taking advantage of previously probed in this hydrodynamical cosmological simulation. In this method, we count subhaloes with total mass above $10^{11.5} \, h^{-1} \, M_\odot$ within a sphere of radius 3 $h^{-1}$ Mpc, centred in dark matter haloes, divided by the volume of the sphere. Unlike Artale et al. (2018), we also include the subhaloes that belong to the same host halo in which the sphere is centred. The calculation is done by adopting periodic boundary conditions and is normalized by the number density of subhaloes in the box with the same mass cut.

We rank the systems using the environmental definition above to identify the highest densities as the overdensity regions of interest. The number of selected overdense systems is the same as the number of haloes with $M_{200c} \geq 10^{13} \, h^{-1} \, M_\odot$ in IllustrisTNG300. We then remove from the primary sample the central galaxies around these overdensities out to 5 $h^{-1}$ Mpc, which we refer again to as the sample ‘PrimNotAOD’. The mean quenched fractions of neighbours for this case are shown in Fig. 12 (dotted lines). The conformity signal is $\Delta_fQ \sim 0.08$ and 0.04 at scales of 1 and 2 $h^{-1}$ Mpc, respectively, in the primary sample ‘PrimNotAOD’. These values are smaller than the case with the fiducial sample ‘PrimAll’ (solid lines) with $\Delta_fQ \approx 0.24$ and 0.14 at scales of 1 and 2 $h^{-1}$ Mpc. The sample ‘PrimNotAC’ (dashed lines) shows the smallest conformity signal at scales of ~1 $h^{-1}$ Mpc with $\Delta_fQ \lesssim 0.04$, but the signals between the cases ‘PrimNotAOD’ and ‘PrimNotAC’ are comparable from scales $r \gtrsim 3 \, h^{-1}$ Mpc. Again, these results suggest that it is better to characterize the systems that affect nearby low-mass central galaxies, responsible for the two-halo conformity, by the halo mass than the overdensities.
Galactic conformity at few Mpc scales

Figure 11. Same panels as Fig. 4 but including the ‘PrimNotAOD’ sample. The dashed-dotted lines show the mean quenched fractions after removing from the primary sample the central galaxies in the vicinity of the densest systems in the SAG$\beta_{1.3}$ catalogue (light coral and royal blue lines for quenched and star-forming primary galaxies, respectively, in the main panels).

Figure 12. Same as Fig. 11 but for primary galaxies in the stellar mass range $10^{9.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$ in the IllustrisTNG300 simulation. In this case, results using an over-density estimator computed on scales of 3 $h^{-1}$ Mpc are included (dotted lines, see Sect. 5.3 for details).

5.4 Why is there a correlation between central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters and neighbouring galaxies?

In this paper, we have demonstrated an excess of correlation between quenched (red), low-mass central galaxies located in the vicinity of galaxy groups and galaxy clusters and quenched (red) neighbouring galaxies out to distances of $r \sim 3$ $h^{-1}$ Mpc. The two-halo conformity signal $\Delta f_Q (\Delta f_i)$ reduces to $\lesssim 0.02$ when these low-mass central galaxies are not considered in the primary sample. This correlation mainly explains the two-halo conformity found in cosmological simulations and, probably, in observations. Why does this correlation exist? It has been shown that relatively massive haloes could disrupt the expected growth of near smaller objects and, therefore, affect their properties (e.g. Wang, Mo & Jing 2007; Dalal et al. 2008; Hahn et al. 2009; Salcedo et al. 2018). The latter effect may include the properties of the central galaxies hosted by the disrupted haloes (e.g. Lacerna & Padilla 2011).

Here, we make a simple test on checking the distance of quenched and star-forming central galaxies to the nearest massive halo with $M_{200c} \geq 10^{13} h^{-1} M_\odot$ in MD$\Delta$SAG catalogue. For low-mass central galaxies with $10^{9.7} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10}$, the median distance is 1.3 $h^{-1}$ Mpc for quenched central galaxies, whereas it is 6.2 $h^{-1}$ Mpc for star-forming central galaxies. Therefore, quenched low-mass central galaxies are typically much closer to massive haloes than star-forming central galaxies of the same mass (by a factor of ~5). For intermediate central galaxies with $10^{10.3} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.5}$, the median distances to the nearest massive halo are similar between quenched and star-forming central galaxies (5.4 and 6.1 $h^{-1}$ Mpc, respectively), which suggests both populations tend to reside in similar large-scale environments relatively far from the tidal influence of other massive haloes. For more massive central galaxies with $10^{10.5} \leq M_*/h^{-1} M_\odot < 10^{10.7}$, the median distances to the nearest massive halo are 5.5 $h^{-1}$ Mpc for
quenched centrals and $6.2 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ for star-forming centrals. These distances are very similar to those in the previous stellar mass bin. The combination of dominant internal processes in more massive galaxies (see Introduction) and the large separation from massive groups and clusters can explain why the two-halo conformity signal is small ($\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.02$) for central galaxies at intermediate masses and, also, for massive central galaxies.

The median distances of the star-forming central galaxies to the nearest massive halo are remarkably similar between the three stellar-mass ranges. On average, these galaxies continue their expected growth because they are far enough from the influence of massive systems. In contrast, the median distance of low-mass quenched central galaxies to the nearest massive halo is notoriously smaller compared to those of more massive quenched central galaxies. The correlation between central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters and neighbouring galaxies is because the environment around these massive systems has probably affected the expected growth of nearby haloes and, consequently, of the central galaxies hosted by them. The nearby truncated, low-mass central galaxies are typically quenched and exhibit red colours, similar to satellite galaxies inside the virial radius of massive systems. Our results support a scenario where the environmental effects are not locked within the virial radius only; they can extend further and affect nearby galaxies. The two-halo conformity represents the environmental influence of relatively massive systems out to few Mpc scales. It is not the scope of this paper to explore those environmental effects, which will be addressed elsewhere, but we can argue they are not related to ram-pressure stripping because its formalism is only implemented on satellite galaxies within the virial radius of host haloes in the SAG models. This mechanism is not implemented on central galaxies in the outskirts of galaxy groups or galaxy clusters. Any conformity signal obtained from the SAG models in scales involving disconnected halo merger trees should be strictly driven by the different mass growth histories of the dark matter haloes because they depend on the environment. Therefore, a feasible effect acting on these quenched, low-mass central galaxies is that the amount of gas accreted by their host dark matter haloes is strongly limited due to the stoppage in the growth of the host haloes produced by the nearby massive systems. Without gas replenishment, the star formation in these low-mass central galaxies is halted.

### 6 CONCLUSIONS

We have studied the environment around groups and clusters of galaxies with halo mass $M_{200c} \geq 10^{13} \, h^{-1} \, \text{M}_\odot$ using two galaxy catalogues generated from different versions of the semi-analytic model SAG applied to the MDPL2 cosmological simulation (MD$_\text{SAG}$ and SAG$_{1.3}$ catalogues), and the ILLUSTRIS-TNG300 cosmological hydrodynamical simulation. Low-mass central galaxies in the vicinity of these massive systems out to $5 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ are preferentially quenched compared to other central galaxies at fixed stellar mass or fixed host halo mass at $z \sim 0$ in all these cosmological simulations. We find consistently in all the galaxy catalogues that these low-mass central galaxies mostly produce the two-halo galactic conformity measured at large separations of several Mpc between the low-mass central galaxy and neighbouring galaxies in adjacent haloes.

In summary, we measure the mean quenched fractions of neighbouring galaxies as functions of the real space distance from quenched primary galaxies and star-forming primary galaxies. The primary samples correspond to central galaxies in the simulations. The galactic conformity signal for a given distance, $\Delta f_Q(r)$, is measured as the difference between these mean quenched fractions at fixed mass of the primary galaxies. For the fiducial sample ‘PrimAll’, the conformity is important for low-mass primary galaxies ($M_* \lesssim 10^{10} \, h^{-1} \, \text{M}_\odot$), with $\Delta f_Q \sim 0.15$, $0.19$, and $0.24$ at $r \sim 1 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ in the MD$_\text{SAG}$, SAG$_{1.3}$, and the ILLUSTRIS-TNG300 simulation, respectively. The conformity signal declines to $\Delta f_Q$ values lower than $0.02$ at distances larger than $7 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ from the low-mass primary galaxies in these simulations (Figs. 2 and 5). The conformity signal is significantly reduced when the central galaxies in the vicinity of groups and clusters are removed from the primary sample (‘PrimNotAC’) with $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.02$ for scales $r \gtrsim 1 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ in both SAMs (Figs. 2 and 4), and $\Delta f_Q \lesssim 0.02$ at $r \gtrsim 1.5 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ in ILLUSTRIS-TNG300 (Fig. 5).

The trends with the conformity signal remain for primary galaxies at fixed halo mass. For primary galaxies in low-mass host haloes of $10^{11.4} \lesssim M_{200c} \lesssim 10^{11.6}$ in the MD$_\text{SAG}$ catalogue, $\Delta f_Q \sim 0.16$ at $r \sim 1 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ in the sample ‘PrimAll’, and it reduces to $\Delta f_Q \sim 0.02$ at scales larger than $7 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$. However, $\Delta f_Q$ is $\lesssim 0.02$ at distances $r \gtrsim 1 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ from the primary galaxies in the sample ‘PrimNotAC’ (Fig. 5).

We tested that the results in the sample ‘PrimNotAC’ are not an artifact of removing galaxies in the primary sample. Removing central galaxies randomly from the primary sample does not modify the quenched fractions of neighbours at distances of a few Mpc from the primary galaxies in ‘PrimAll’ (Figs. 3 and 4). The conformity signal at few Mpc scales depends on the vicinity radius around relatively massive haloes in which we remove central galaxies, though (Fig. 10). Probably, the radial influence of haloes depends on their mass, but we tested that this influence on low-mass central galaxies does not reach scales much more extensive than $5 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$.

We also explored the effects in central galaxies around overdensities (‘PrimNotAOD’) instead of the case around massive haloes. By using two definitions for selecting the densest systems, the case ‘PrimNotAOD’ is comparable to the case ‘PrimNotAC’ for scales $r \gtrsim 2-3 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$, but the environment around groups and clusters defined by their halo mass better characterizes the two-halo conformity than the environment around overdensities at $r \gtrsim 1 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$, in general (Figs. 11 and 12).

We find that the excess of correlation between quenched, low-mass central galaxies located in the vicinity of galaxy groups and clusters and quenched neighbouring galaxies out to distances of $\sim 3 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ mostly produces the two-halo conformity. The quenched, low-mass central galaxies are typically much closer to massive haloes than star-forming central galaxies of the same mass (by a factor of $\sim 5$). Future works will be needed to determine if the host haloes of the quenched, low-mass central galaxies have been disrupted by the overwhelming presence of nearby massive systems. Any conformity signal obtained from the central galaxies in the outskirts of galaxy groups or galaxy clusters is not an artifact of removing galaxies in the primary sample. Removing central galaxies randomly from the primary sample does not modify the quenched fractions of neighbours at distances of a few Mpc from the primary galaxies in ‘PrimAll’ (Figs. 3 and 4). The conformity signal at few Mpc scales depends on the vicinity radius around relatively massive haloes in which we remove central galaxies, though (Fig. 10). Probably, the radial influence of haloes depends on their mass, but we tested that this influence on low-mass central galaxies does not reach scales much more extensive than $5 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$.

We also explored the effects in central galaxies around overdensities (‘PrimNotAOD’) instead of the case around massive haloes. By using two definitions for selecting the densest systems, the case ‘PrimNotAOD’ is comparable to the case ‘PrimNotAC’ for scales $r \gtrsim 2-3 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$, but the environment around groups and clusters defined by their halo mass better characterizes the two-halo conformity than the environment around overdensities at $r \gtrsim 1 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$, in general (Figs. 11 and 12).

We find that the excess of correlation between quenched, low-mass central galaxies located in the vicinity of galaxy groups and clusters and quenched neighbouring galaxies out to distances of $\sim 3 \, h^{-1} \, \text{Mpc}$ mostly produces the two-halo conformity. The quenched, low-mass central galaxies are typically much closer to massive haloes than star-forming central galaxies of the same mass (by a factor of $\sim 5$). Future works will be needed to determine if the host haloes of the quenched, low-mass central galaxies have been disrupted by the overwhelming presence of nearby massive systems.
haloes, which in turn may affect the expected star formation of these low-mass central galaxies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors acknowledge the kind support of the computing team at IATE, FR, ALO and ANR thanks the support by Agencia Nacional de Promoción Científica y Tecnológica, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET, Argentina), and Secretaría de Ciencia y Tecnología de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (SeCyT-UNC, Argentina). ADMD thanks Fondecyt for financial support through the Fondecyt Regular 2021 grant 1210612. SAC acknowledges funding from Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET, PIP-0387), Agencia Nacional de Promoción de la Investigación, el Desarrollo Tecnológico y la Innovación (Agencia I+D+i, PICT-2018-3743), and Universidad Nacional de La Plata (G11-150), Argentina. MCA acknowledges financial support from the Austrian National Science Foundation through FWF stand-alone grant P31154-N27. CVM acknowledges support from ANID/FONDECYT through grant 3200918, and he also acknowledges support from the Max Planck Society through a Partner Group grant. The authors gratefully acknowledge the kind support of the computing team at IATE. FR, ALO and ANR thanks the support by the Partnership for Advanced Supercomputing in Europe (PRACE, www.prace-ri.eu) for funding the MultiDark simulation project by providing computing time on the GCS Supercomputer SuperMUC at Leibniz Supercomputing Centre (LRZ, www.lrz.de).

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data underlying this article is available as follows. The MD_SAG galaxy catalogue is publicly available at the Cosmosim database [http://www.cosmosim.org/]. The SAG13 galaxy catalogue will be shared on reasonable request to the corresponding author. The galaxy catalogue is publicly available at the CosmoSim database [http://www.cosmosim.org/]. The SAG13 galaxy catalogue will be shared on reasonable request to the corresponding author. The IllustrisTNG300 simulation is publicly available at the TNG website https://www.tng-project.org/.

REFERENCES

Aguerri J. A. L., Méndez-Abreu J., Corsini E. M., 2009, A&A, 495, 491
Alam S., Peacock J. A., Kraljic K., Ross A. J., Comparat J., 2020, MNRAS, 497, 581
Alpaslan M. et al., 2015, MNRAS, 451, 3249
Aragon-Salamanca A., Ellis R. S., Couch W. J., Carter D., 1993, MNRAS, 262, 764
Argudo-Fernández M., Lacerna I., Duarte Puertas S., 2018, A&A, 620, A113
Artale M. C., Zehavi I., Contreras S., Norberg P., 2018, MNRAS, 480, 3978
Aymormiou M., Kauffmann G., Yates R. M., Nelson D., White S. D. M., 2021, MNRAS, 505, 492
Behroozi P. S., Wechsler R. H., Wu H.-Y., 2013, ApJ, 762, 109
Behroozi P. S., Wechsler R. H., Wu H.-Y., Busca M. T., Klypin A. A., Primack J. R., 2013, ApJ, 763, 18
Benítez-Llambay A., Navarro J. F., Abadi M. G., Gottlöber S., Yepes G., Hoffman Y., Steinmetz M., 2013, ApJL, 763, L41
Berti A. M., Coil A. L., Behroozi P. S., Eisenstein D. J., Bray A. D., Cool R. J., Moustakas J., 2017, ApJ, 834, 87
Blanton M. R., Moustakas J., 2009, ARA&A, 47, 159
Bluck A. F. L., Mendel J. T., Ellison S. L., Moreno J., Simard L., Patton D. R., Starkenburg E., 2014, MNRAS, 441, 599
Bluck A. F. L. et al., 2016, MNRAS, 462, 2559
Bose S., Eisenstein D. J., Hernquist L., Pillepich A., Nelson D., Marinacci F., Springel V., Vogelsberger M., 2019, MNRAS, 490, 5693
Bower R. G., Benson A. J., Malbon R., Helly J. C., Frenk C. S., Baugh C. M., Cole S., Lacey C. G., 2006, MNRAS, 370, 645
Bray A. D. et al., 2016, MNRAS, 455, 185
Brown T. et al., 2017, MNRAS, 466, 1275
Calderon V. F., Berlind A. A., Sinha M., 2018, MNRAS, 480, 2031
Campbell D., van den Bosch F. C., Hearin A., Padmanabhan N., Berlind A., Mo H. J., Tinker J., Yang X., 2015, MNRAS, 452, 444
Collacchioni F., Cora S. A., Lagos C. D. P., Vega-Martínez C. A., 2018, MNRAS, 481, 954
Contreras S., Angulo R., Zennaro M., 2020, arXiv e-prints, arXiv:2012.06596
Cora S. A., 2006, MNRAS, 368, 1540
Cora S. A. et al., 2018, MNRAS, 479, 2
Cortese L., Catinella B., Boissier S., Boselli A., Heinis S., 2011, MNRAS, 415, 1797
Cybulski R., Yun M. S., Fazio G. G., Gutermuth R. A., 2014, MNRAS, 439, 3564
Dalal N., White M., Bond J. R., Shirokov A., 2008, ApJ, 687, 12
Davis M., Efstathiou G., Frenk C. S., White S. D. M., 1985, ApJ, 292, 371
Dellino F. M., Scoccola C. G., Cora S. A., Vega-Martínez C. A., Gargiulo I. D., 2021, arXiv e-prints, arXiv:2102.01837
Dolag K., Borgani S., Murante G., Springel V., 2009, MNRAS, 399, 497
Domínguez M. J., Zandivarez A. A., Martínez H. J., Merchán M. E., Muriel H., Lambas D. G., 2002, MNRAS, 335, 825
Dressler A., 1980, ApJ, 236, 351
Duckworth C., Tojeiro R., Kraljic K., Sgrò M. A., Wild V., Weijmans A.-M., Lacerna I., Drory N., 2019, MNRAS, 483, 172
Favole G., Montero-Dorta A. D., Artale M. C., Contreras S., Zehavi I., Xu X., 2021, arXiv e-prints, arXiv:2101.10733
Gargiulo I. D. et al., 2015, MNRAS, 446, 3820
Garling C. T., Peter A. H. G., Kochanek C. S., Sand D. J., Crnojević D., 2020, MNRAS, 492, 1713
Gavazzi G., Consolandi G., Gutierrez M. L., Boselli A., Yoshida M., 2018, A&A, 618, A130
Gelé S. et al., 2014, MNRAS, 445, 175
Gill S. P. D., Knebe A., Gibson B. K., 2005, MNRAS, 356, 1327
Giovanelli R., Haynes M. P., 1985, AJ, 90, 2445
Goddard D. et al., 2017, MNRAS, 465, 688

Galactic conformity at few Mpc scales
Zinger E., Dekel A., Kravtsov A. V., Nagai D., 2018, MNRAS, 475, 3654
Zu Y., Mandelbaum R., 2018, MNRAS, 476, 1637