Intergenerational Transmission of Economic Self-Sufficiency: Insights from the Comparative Analysis

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15.1 Introduction

In view of the recent rise in youth unemployment in Europe, which reached its peak in 2012/2013 (Tosun et al. 2019), factors that facilitate or impede young people in becoming economically self-sufficient have become a topic of prime interest to both policymakers and...
academics. And with the COVID-19 pandemic and its drastic consequences for European economies, we expect youth unemployment to re-enter the political agenda. The concept of economic self-sufficiency takes into account whether the income generated from employment is sufficient to help young people live in a financially autonomous manner (Gowdy and Pearlmutter 1993; Hetling et al. 2016; Lee and Mortimer 2009; Tosun, Arco-Tirado, et al. 2019; Warmuth et al. 2015). From a theoretical perspective, we concentrated on the role of families to the young people’s attainment of economic self-sufficiency—a perspective that has been identified as important for explaining the causes of youth unemployment in Europe (O’Reilly et al. 2015).

The authors who contributed to this volume carried out interviews with three generations of families, with a view to learning how values and attitudes related to work and education are transmitted within the family, and to what extent the resources provided by families affect the young people’s attitudes, values, and actions with regard to the attainment of economic self-sufficiency. From a complementary perspective, the interviewers also sought to ascertain the extent to which the young people’s wish to preserve the ‘inherited’ social class determined these outcomes variables (see Chapter 2). The families included in the analysis were selected accordingly to carefully defined methodological criteria as stipulated in Chapter 3. Despite the challenges in recruiting families for the purpose of this study and the complications in carrying out interviews with three generations of each family, the interviewers—who, in most instances, were also the authors of the respective country chapters—jointly interviewed 344 young adults, parents, and grandparents grouped in 117 families in eleven countries. This extensive empirical material was discussed countrywise in Chapters 4–14, and revealed some intriguing insights into family dynamics and how these shape the young people’s attitudes, values, and actions related to economic self-sufficiency.

We can now offer a comparative discussion of the findings as well as answer the research questions that we formulated in Chapter 1. To this end, we begin by sketching out the theoretically derived dimensions of the comparative discussion. Then we draw together the reported findings and offer an integrated discussion of and reflection on them. Finally, we turn to the answers to the research questions and close this chapter by identifying promising avenues for future research.
15.2 Dimensions of Comparison

It is not easy to compare findings derived from qualitative research and interview data. Whereas survey data, which have frequently been used to examine some of the theoretical constructs we are interested in (e.g. Tosun, Arco-Tirado, et al. 2019), are specifically designed to provide comparative insights and thereby facilitate the robust testing of hypotheses, interview data, which are by design richer and more complex, provide insights into the details (see Chapter 3). Therefore, a scheme for the comparative discussion of the findings has to strike a balance between rigidity, in the sense of a shared set of guidelines, and openness. This would facilitate elaboration on some aspects of the interview material more than on others, providing this is justified by the data. In light of these considerations, we structure our comparative discussion of the empirical findings along the theoretically derived variables as introduced in Chapter 2, and to use these as dimensions of the presentation of the main insights. Thus, our presentation will stress specific observations for the families based in the individual countries, while allowing for a synthesised discussion.

As a result of our organisational scheme, the following section begins with empirical insights into the young people’s attitudes, values, and actions related to economic self-sufficiency. The second dimension consists of socialisation effects within families, and is followed by the interviewers’ observations concerning the intergenerational transfer of resources within families, which constitutes the third dimension. The fourth dimension refers to the question of how important the parental social class is for influencing the young people’s attitudes, values, and actions. The parenting styles and their (conditioning) effects make up the fifth dimension, and the sixth concerns the various contexts as discussed in the chapters on individual countries.

15.3 Discussion of the Main Findings

While the country chapters all followed the same theoretical and methodological framework for producing and analysing the interview data, the individual chapters vary to some extent as regards the elaboration on the country specific relevance of respective theoretical constructs, guided by the country-specific relevance structures revealed in the interviews. As a result, the country studies provide complementary insights in processes
of intergenerational transmission and how these affect young people’s attitudes, values, and actions related to economic self-sufficiency.

15.3.1 Attitudes, Values, and Actions Related to the Attainment of Economic Self-sufficiency

The interviews carried out by the various teams revealed that in some countries patterns could be observed which were similar across generations (e.g. the importance of ‘terbiye’ values in Turkey), whereas in others (e.g. the importance of work vs. leisure in Spain) intergenerational shifts were evident.

The Austrian interviewees suggested that intrinsic work values, such as satisfaction with the job, were very important to both parents and children, and the parents even expressed their hope of having transmitted such values successfully. The interviews also hinted at the importance of perseverance, which was also shared by parents and their children.

Young Danes in employment expressed views that correspond to the values of self-direction and self-enhancement. For the unemployed youth in Denmark, the picture was mixed in terms of attitudes and values, but on average, young people interviewed responded that they value being independent of their parents.

A similar split between youth from higher-income families on the one side and low- and middle-income families on the other could be observed by the German interviewers. The first emphasised goal-setting and the need to achieve as well as intrinsic work values and a good work ethic. Youth belonging to the second group did not pay so much attention to work values, but emphasised traditional values related to the family instead.

The Swiss team observed shifts in the emphasis on specific values from one generation to another, for example concerning the prioritisation of work. Nevertheless, across all generations, the Swiss interviewees expressed a general belief in work as a central part of life, which is a pattern that could also be observed for the families interviewed in the United Kingdom: the respondents of all generations equally stressed the importance of work, but the motivation for valuing work was different. British families with more cultural capital and belonging more to the upper middle classes, saw education as an experience and work as something fulfilling. Families from lower socio-economic classes, while still having the economic capital to pay for higher education, saw higher
education as a means to an end, getting a job, and a job was a means to the end of earning a good living.

In Greece, traditional values of education and family are transmitted across generations. The younger generations also communicated the necessity of adaptability and independence as they reflected the current situation in the labour market, which is a difficult one, especially for the young labour force. Compared to employment in the private sector, working as a civil servant or having one’s own business were valued as careers which provide security as well as social status.

The Hungarian interviews revealed an orientation towards traditional values related to family and national identity, which were similar across the generations. The interviewees across all three generations also stressed the importance of professional orientation and diligence.

The interviews carried out in Italy revealed a split between the values and attitudes of young people who were self-sufficient and of young people who had not (yet) achieved self-sufficiency. The first emphasised values linked to self-determination, ambition, and achievement, in combination with a positive attitude towards taking risks. Youth with difficulties in attaining economic self-sufficiency did not refer to achievement and ambition and lacked a future job trajectory.

In Spain, good family health, higher educational attainment, and close family bonds were the three factors re-iterated by the majority of young respondents, but the interviewers also observed a discontinuity in work-related values across the generations. Differences in work-related values and attitudes were particularly noticeable between the second and third generations, as young respondents tended to value spending time with families and friends over working to earn more money.

The Turkish team introduced the concept of ‘terbiye’ values, which comprise good behaviour in the sense of respect, especially obedience to elders, loyalty, and being cultivated and educated. This set of values, together with the importance of having a well-regarded profession, were stressed by all generations interviewed. Even though grandparents and parents did not value women’s careers, nor strived for high-quality jobs themselves when they were younger, the interviewees regarded necessary for young women to have careers of their own considering the current state of Turkey’s economy. This observation resonates with recent studies on the role of parents and grandparents in the career adaptability of the third generation of a family (e.g. Garcia et al. 2019). More generally, across all generations of the Turkish families interviewed, education is
seen as the most secure way to protect one’s socio-economic and social status and to move up the social ladder.

In the Czech families in which parents transmitted attitudes such as an active approach to life, willingness to take risks, trust, the ability to self-reflect, and also values such as a high regard for work-related achievements and constant self-development, the interviewees indicated that the youth tended to adapt more successfully to the contemporary labour market. Families that did not encourage their offspring to attain economic self-sufficiency transmitted a more passive approach to life, higher risk avoidance, and distrust across generations. The central values they transmitted were family and interrelatedness as opposed to work and achievement.

In all countries, youth who were economically self-sufficient also responded that they were willing to take risks or had taken risks in the past. One striking observation across all countries, though, is that both youth who have reached self-sufficiency and those who have not try to improve their situation by working, even if it means working in different jobs or in the low-wage sector. Young Hungarians, for example, often take on a second job in order to afford extras, especially in rural areas. Similarly, in Italy, many young people engage in low-skilled, part-time jobs, even though the payment is too low to lead to economic self-sufficiency. However, the youth who engage in such jobs do it to pull their weight and to contribute to the family budget. Therefore, the interview material suggests that young people are willing to take action to change their level of self-sufficiency, and, as shown by the interviews in Spain, emigration to a different country is among the options considered by them. More generally, the third-generation interviewees who had not attained self-sufficiency indicated a wide range of actions they would be willing to do in order to improve their financial situation.

15.3.2 Socialisation

Parent–child socialisation can occur in three ways: directly (e.g. through active education and communication); indirectly through everyday routines (e.g. modelling desired behaviour); and through the opportunities that parents provide to their children (Kraaykamp et al. 2019: 14).

The Austrian interviewees alluded to all three forms of socialisation, but they emphasised direct socialisation through conversations in the
family related to work and education and to transmitting knowledge on professional activities. An interesting finding relates to parents who did not follow a consistent career pathway and who appeared insecure about their own working conditions. These parents often transmitted these insecurities to their children, which is reflected in their attitudes and actions related to work and education, which resonates with findings in research on the intergenerational transmission of job insecurity (e.g. Lübke 2018).

The interviews with Danish, German, and Italian families both showed that socialisation is particularly important in cases when a third-generation member of a family is an entrepreneur or works in the family business. Especially in family businesses, work plays a central role in the family conversations. Children of self-employed parents appeared to be aware of a wider array of different career options. The parents, and sometimes also grandparents, play a critical role in developing the ‘entrepreneurial spirit’ and a more positive attitude to risk-taking. Working in the family business ensures the transmission of values such as hard work and the skills and the pride to continue the family business.

The Danish interviews also revealed that unemployed youth often lack role models who could inspire them to invest more in education or to take risks in order to become economically self-sufficient.

In Switzerland, family members—most notably the parents—influence the youth’s decisions on apprenticeships or their choice of studies by directly offering advice. The Swiss team observed that many young people, especially in families working in agriculture, followed their parents’ path.

In the cases of Greece and Italy, socialisation in the family context is crucial, as many young people tend to live with their parents not only for financial reasons but also due to interdependence among family members. The interviews showed that all three forms of socialisation existed in the families selected.

Direct communication and role-modelling were mentioned as crucial socialisation mechanisms in Hungary, especially in the case of family-employed offspring. Traditional values related to family or national identity were often passed on to the offspring intentionally by means of direct socialisation. On the other hand, work values such as professional orientation and diligence were in most cases transmitted through role-modelling.

The interviews with Spanish families also stressed the importance of all three socialisation mechanisms. Interestingly, however, it is not only
the parents or grandparents who are involved in socialisation, but also members of the extended family, such as uncles, aunts, or cousins, were indicated to play a role in transmitting values and attitudes related to work and education to the youth.

The Turkish parents reported that they sought to influence their children through conversations, which is associated with direct socialisation. In addition to these conversations at home, role models in the family or family friends provide children with examples approved by their parents. From this perspective, there is a similarity between the socialisation processes as they occur in Turkey and Spain.

With the Czech families, role-modelling revealed itself as the most prominent mechanism of socialisation. In the case of the families with economically self-sufficient children, fathers as well as mothers served as role models, and parents also praise their children for achievements in educational as well as extracurricular activities (such as sports). They also communicated their ambitions to their offspring. Unemployed young people, on the contrary, were praised more for how successful they are in their social roles of good and loving family members.

While socialisation within the family was reported to matter for families in all countries, it was found to be relatively less important in the United Kingdom.

15.3.3 Resources

The interviews showed that all forms of capital as introduced by Bourdieu (1979, 1984)—cultural, economic, and social—represent resources that are transferred from one generation to the next. However, the relevance of the individual forms of capital are judged differently by the families based in the different countries.

The family interviews carried out in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom all emphasised the importance of social capital for finding employment, regardless of the socio-economic background of the respective families. The interviews also revealed that parents are willing to invest cultural capital and economic capital in order to help their children to accumulate social capital. For example, the Czech families with economically self-sufficient children stated that they invested significantly in both their children’s curricular and extracurricular education—not only with a view to improving their skills, but also to provide them with a wide social
network. The families with unemployed youngsters, on the other hand, engaged in leisure activities less purposefully, and mainly for pleasure. These families also exhibited the lack of informal contacts capable of providing jobs and cultural capital.

The Turkish parents reported that they enter their children into all sorts of employment initiations and that they mobilise their social networks in order to help their children find a job. Similar to what was reported for the other countries, the families in Turkey also spend a lot of time together; however, this involves the friends or acquaintances of the parents and grandparents as well as the extended family. Thus, while spending time together helps to transmit cultural capital, it simultaneously transmits social capital.

A noteworthy observation in this regard is made in the chapter on Greek families, in which the authors argued that strong family ties limited the social capital of young people since they spend more time with their families than with people outside the family. To put it in the words of Putnam (2001), Greek youth benefit from considerable bonding capital, but lack bridging capital.

In the Hungarian case, the transmission of cultural capital was seen as very important, and parents emphasised their efforts to give their children access to classical literature and music as well as to Hungarian history. To invest in their children’s education revealed itself as typical, though in some cases it was driven by the parents’ own unfulfilled professional aspirations.

The interviews with Austrian, Danish, and German families also demonstrated the importance of cultural capital. Remarkably, the transmission of cultural capital was not fundamentally different between families of high-, middle-, and low-income. They all reported undertaking numerous family activities, though these varied accordingly to the families’ financial means.

While the importance of social capital in particular was stressed by many interviewees, comparatively few emphasised economic capital. However, families in the United Kingdom elaborated on the importance of economic capital, and the interviewers could observe directly the divide in the ability of families to transfer economic capital from one generation to the next. The transmission of social and cultural capital, conversely, was less visible.

The interviews carried out with the Italian families also suggested that family endowments affect both the youth’s education and their career
choices. Poorer families reported economic hardship when it came to providing their children with economic resources, especially when they had to decide whether to enter tertiary education.

Economic capital and its transmission from one generation to the next was also an important theme with regard to families running a family business. Interviews carried out in various countries with such families showed that the third generation of family members benefits from gaining access to economic capital early on, as it strengthens the impact of attitudes and values related to work and education, which also tend to be very similar between parents and children.

In Spain, the young people interviewed indicated they regard themselves as the beneficiaries of a certain accumulation of economic and human capital across previous generations. Despite this favourable endowment of capital, however, contextual factors, youth unemployment, and precarious employment must be considered important reasons as to why this generation has experienced difficulties in becoming self-sufficient.

### 15.3.4 Risk Aversion

In Chapter 2, we outlined that we follow the reasoning of the relative risk aversion theory as put forth by Breen and Goldthorpe (1997). In brief, the theoretical model has two important aspects: first, children strive to preserve the social class that they ‘inherited’ from their parents and will therefore invest in education to avoid downward social mobility; second, children may stop investing in education when they anticipate that they have already invested enough to attain the goal of preserving their parents’ social class. We reiterate the model here because the interviews revealed that interviewees in various countries perceive a risk of downward social mobility. However, the interviews did not find that children—not even those coming from high-income families—responded that they would stop investing in their education.

Austrian families stressed that the educational success of their offspring was a core aim and that they were willing to invest the resources needed to ensure its attainment. Downward social mobility was clearly perceived as a risk, especially by parents.

In the case of Greece, high upward mobility was observed across generations with respect to their level of education. The same goes for the Hungarian families interviewed, but the differences in social class are
particularly visible for the generations of the grandparents and the grandchildren. Most interviewees referred to foreign language skills as one of the most important vehicles of upward mobility. Upward social mobility was also observed with some Czech families, but generally the education levels across the generations were more similar than those in Hungary.

In Turkey, the parents interviewed indicated that they do not want their children to preserve their social class, but to experience upward social mobility. Similarly, the responses given by the parents’ generation in Italy, Hungary, and Spain suggest that families are willing to ‘over-invest’ in their children if it will help them move to a higher social class.

Another remarkable observation is that while concerns about downward mobility were expressed by families in almost all countries, this was not the case in Denmark and in Switzerland. This phenomenon is arguably related to the generosity of the welfare regime (in the case of Denmark) and the strong economy (in the case of Switzerland). Further, the interviews carried out in Germany do not suggest that relative risk aversion is a mechanism at work there. Similarly, the chapter on the United Kingdom stated that cultural and social reproduction matters more than risk aversion for explaining our outcome variables.

In sum, in most of the countries, families wish to facilitate the upward social mobility of their children and to attain this they invest considerably in their education. Effectively, however, in many of the sampled families these investments were perceived to mostly only prevent downward social mobility.

15.3.5 Parenting Styles

Parenting styles can be divided into authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive (subdivided in indulgent and neglectful), as discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

In Austria, families with an academic background stressed that their children are free to make any decisions, although the chapter authors state that when the children reflected on this, it at times appeared that the decisions were affected by the preferences of their parents or grandparents. In families with a non-academic background, the parenting style was found to stress diligence, discipline, authority, and politeness.

The dominant parenting style in Denmark and Germany was authoritative parenting. In Switzerland, with regard to parental influence on
career decisions, the youngest generation, as well as the parental generation, almost unanimously reported that they were free to make their own career decisions and that their parents supported them in their decision-making process, which indicates the prevalence of permissive parenting. The young Swiss replied that they accept the parents’ lead and make choices similar to them.

For the British families, both permissive and authoritarian parenting could be observed. Interestingly, in families with a larger involvement of grandparents, authoritarian parenting dominated. Overall, grandparents showed a greater tendency for authoritarian parenting, suggesting a generational shift in parenting practices. The interviews suggested that in their interactions with grandchildren, the grandparents continued to rely on this authoritarian style.

In the case of Hungary, the parenting style had a strong, moderating effect. The authoritative parenting style seen in most of the families helped to support values of self-direction and autonomy as well as cultural capital across generations. On the contrary, a neglectful parenting style, exhibited especially by fathers who were not involved in family life due to work, was described as ‘a failure’ by the interviewees themselves.

Czech families with economically self-sufficient youth exhibited an authoritative parenting style where children were emotionally supported and reasonable demands were made of them. Authoritarian and overprotective parenting styles were present in families with a less self-sufficient youngest generation, especially when the relationship between an authoritarian father and his son seemed to be counterproductive in regard of the attainment of economic self-sufficiency.

The parenting style observed in the interviews carried out in Turkey is described as a combination of parental emotional warmth and the granting of autonomy, but with psychological control of the children. There is a trend towards more authoritative parenting, the granting of autonomy, and the inclusion of women with younger generations and families living in urban settings with relatively high incomes. Such families also tend to focus less on traditional gender roles and more on the opportunities of future generations. From this perspective, the parenting styles observed in Turkey correspond to the style that could be observed for the Greek families which reflected the patriarchal structure of their society, the traditional division of gender roles, and high levels of interrelatedness.
In Italy, although in almost all interviews parents declared that they leave their children free to make their own decisions, it seems that they, somehow indirectly, induce their children to accept their decisions. In Spain, most families, and particularly third-generation respondents, manifested a good relationship with their parents and grandparents. Most young respondents stated that their parents had high expectations regarding their future, but few of them reported feeling pressured by these. This could indicate a permissive parenting style.

In short, most families in our study indicated that they pursue an authoritative parenting style, but we could also observe instances of authoritarian and permissive approaches. Authoritarian parenting especially was either observed for the grandparents’ generation or for low-income families.

15.3.6 Contextual Factors

The chapters on Germany and Switzerland showed the importance of the welfare state. In Germany, most interviewed young adults grew up in a household in which the mother quit work and stayed at home to take care of the children and the family. Therefore, many third-generation interviewees reported that their father was absent to some degree due to work duties, whereas the mother was around at all times or at least most of the time. The Swiss chapter reported that the liberal welfare state puts the family at centre stage, and in doing so underscored the importance of parental support and influence. Interestingly, in Denmark, a universal welfare state, families also seem to matter a lot to the economic self-sufficiency of young people. What is more, as the authors of the chapter flagged, the interviewees emphasised the importance of social networks for finding employment, which represents a somewhat unexpected finding for a country that is widely regarded as a leader in facilitating youth employment (e.g. Tosun et al. 2017).

The transition from a socialist country and the change of family policy as well as to free education obviously influenced the socialisation of children in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Similarly, the regime change had a strong impact on the generation of the parents and their work opportunities. Therefore, the Czech Republic and Hungary are two countries in our sample where the country-specific context is not only defined
by the characteristics of the welfare state, but also by a far-reaching transformation of the economic, political, and social system. This was also reflected in the respondences of the interviewees.

Turkish society has also experienced a rapid transformation from a rural society to an urban one from the 1950s onwards. During this period of change, cultural values and attitudes have not changed as rapidly as the economy, particularly in the areas of interpersonal and family relations as the chapter authors compellingly argued. This explains why the interviews revealed the existence of values and attitudes that are predominantly associated with the traditional rural population alongside modern values and attitudes typical of respondents living in urban areas.

While transformation processes are important in the cases of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Turkey, in the cases of Greece, Italy, and Spain the lack of employment opportunities for the youth constitute a critical contextual factor which has a strong moderating effect on the strategies of the youth and their families alike. As explained above, Italian families are willing to significantly invest in the education of their children, but since there is little demand for youth labour, families do not get the expected return on their investment. What is more, according to the interviews, the families feel overwhelmed by the various functions they have to fulfil in order to help their children to become economically self-sufficient. This also goes for Greece and Spain, where families must support the third generation financially as well as through other forms of support, such as housing and child care. In these three countries, the combination of a weak welfare state and a lack of employment opportunities for the youth form the context in which family processes take place.

In this regard, the interviews with Spanish families revealed that the unfavourable labour market for young people is one of the reasons, why today risk aversion dominates the decisions of parents concerning the education of their children. The economic situation resulted in a devaluation of the family’s economic and social capital, which has forced families to invest even more in the education of the children.

15.4 Answers to the Research Questions

We now draw together the country-specific findings outlined in the previous section and offer a synthesis of the findings in order to answer the research questions formulated in Chapter 1.
How does socialisation regarding work and education occur within the family?

Our findings suggest that in most of the families observed, parents served as role models regarding education and employment. Orientation towards work and achievement in the domains of education and work is an important driver, articulated in many cases through the parents’ ambitions. Self-direction, self-reflection, and willingness to take risks were also attitudes transmitted by means of verbal messages between parents and their children. In most of the countries, entrepreneurs and those who run family businesses emphasised the value of independence. In addition, the interviews revealed that, in many cases, parents praise their children for taking risks and for being courageous with regard to education and career choices. In contrast, unemployed respondents and their family members held the opposite orientation of values. Families of unemployed young people exhibited the need for security and a strong orientation towards family, and this emphasis on family ties was transmitted from one generation to the next. Risk avoidance, lack of self-reflection, unrealistic expectations concerning one’s future career, and limited social capital, on the other hand, clearly hindered the progression towards self-sufficiency in most countries. To summarise, socialisation within families is a core mechanism for attaining economic self-sufficiency. This mechanism mainly manifested itself in the imitation of parents and grandparents who acted as role models, in acts of communication, and in the various activities which families undertook together. With families who run a family business, the socialisation effect observed was particularly strong, which is plausible given the centrality of that business for the daily lives of the family members.

Does family matter in terms of the wish to maintain the parents’ social status, in terms of resources, or both?

Relative risk aversion theory appears to be supported by most of the interviews and to apply across countries since they revealed that children generally attempt to avoid downward mobility and would most likely perceive it as their own failure were it to occur. In most of the countries, the level of education was even transmitted from one generation to the next, with an increase in the level of education of the youngest generation. The related question of parents investing in their children’s education, however, has lower significance in countries in which education is free of charge than in those in which it is not. Nevertheless, investment in
informal education did play a role even in countries with free formal education: for example, travelling within and outside individual countries can widen respondents’ cultural capital and improve their position on the labour market by the accumulation of social capital. Thus, the self-sufficiency of our respondents was generally determined by every type of resource and consideration concerning economic risks as delineated in Chapter 2, even if their significance was not equal.

Regardless of the countries in which the interviewees were based, the interviews showed that the transmission of economic capital is an important driver of economic self-sufficiency. Solid social capital is typical of families that enhance economic self-sufficiency in their children. The social capital in these cases involves not only the close family, but also the extended as well as friends and acquaintances. Relying on only the close family circle, on the other hand, limits young generations and restricts young peoples’ search for better job opportunities. Being able to communicate with people outside the family goes along with more developed soft skills that can be built through various extracurricular activities (sport, cultural, social, etc.). The lack of social capital was apparent in interviewees who come from rural environments, as well as in those whose families have strong ties with each other but lack ties with individuals outside the family. Both social and cultural capital are transmitted through activities that families do together.

How does the parenting style moderate the transmission process?

Based on our observations, authoritative and indulgent permissive parenting styles were used in most of the cases. A notable exception is the parenting style reported by the authors of the chapter on Turkey, which uniquely combines emotional interdependence with autonomy, permissiveness, and overprotection. Emotional support together with making reasonable demands of children helped youth in our sample to attain economic self-sufficiency and was also perceived very positively by all generations. Within the families in the Czech Republic, Denmark, and Greece, we could observe that authoritarian and overprotective parenting styles led to passive approaches to life. The German interviews revealed that those families in which an inconsistent parenting style was lived, the third-generation respondents had difficulties in attaining economic self-sufficiency. The interviews support a claim in the literature in cross-cultural psychology that positive parenting strengthens intergenerational transmission (Barni et al. 2012; Mayer et al. 2012). Parenting style
moderates the transmission process but its effectiveness depends on the specific cultural context.

*How does the country context, such as welfare state arrangements, moderate the transmission process?*

Regarding welfare arrangements, we found that either they were not explicitly mentioned by the interviewees in countries with more favourable labour market conditions and a generous welfare system, regardless of whether the specific regime under question was conservative (Austria, Germany) or social democratic (Denmark), or the view depended on the economic situation of particular families in a liberal regime (United Kingdom). In countries that embody the so-called Mediterranean model—i.e. ones in which the family performs the central role in terms of care and economic production (family businesses), such as Italy, Spain, Greece, and Turkey (Gal 2010)—youth and women suffer from high unemployment rates and low-paid job offers, and unemployment compensation and vocational training systems are seen as not sufficient. Gender role differences are apparent in the distribution of housework in all samples, as women are still typically housekeepers and pass this role on to their daughters. The studies also revealed differences between urban and rural environments—most notably relating to the adequacy of social networking and possible job opportunities, as these are less available in the rural setting.

*Summary of findings*

Families in all the studied countries significantly shaped the young people’s motivation to become economically self-sufficient. In families which encouraged economic self-sufficiency in their offspring, parents and grandparents emphasised work as a central value, encouraged independence, risk-taking, and favoured a proactive approach to life. On the contrary, families that did not support the economic self-sufficiency of their children focused on the family and elevated it as a central value, thus discouraging young people from taking risks and instead encouraging them to adopt a passive approach to life. The ability of self-reflection was found important, as it helped all generations to follow societal changes and labour market needs efficiently. Also, it supported youth in building their interpersonal skills.
Considering the importance of families to the development of economic self-sufficiency in all of the countries in our sample, parents have a crucial role in the prevention of youth unemployment by serving as role models and encouraging young people to be active and independent. Our research showed that parents should, besides supporting education, also organise various leisure activities, as social and cultural capital are transmitted through the activities that families undertake together. The most effective way of ensuring this is to use an authoritative parenting style, as this facilitates the development of children by demonstrating high levels of responsiveness as well as by making high demands in relation to educational and career choices.

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