

## TOWARDS A NEW PATTERN OF TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD?

Francesco C. Billari, Università Bocconi, Milano



**Generations & Gender Programme Stakeholder Meeting**  
European Parliament

January 2018



# Outline

- A new pattern of transition to adulthood
- Unequal opportunities
- Policy implications ?

# The transition to adulthood

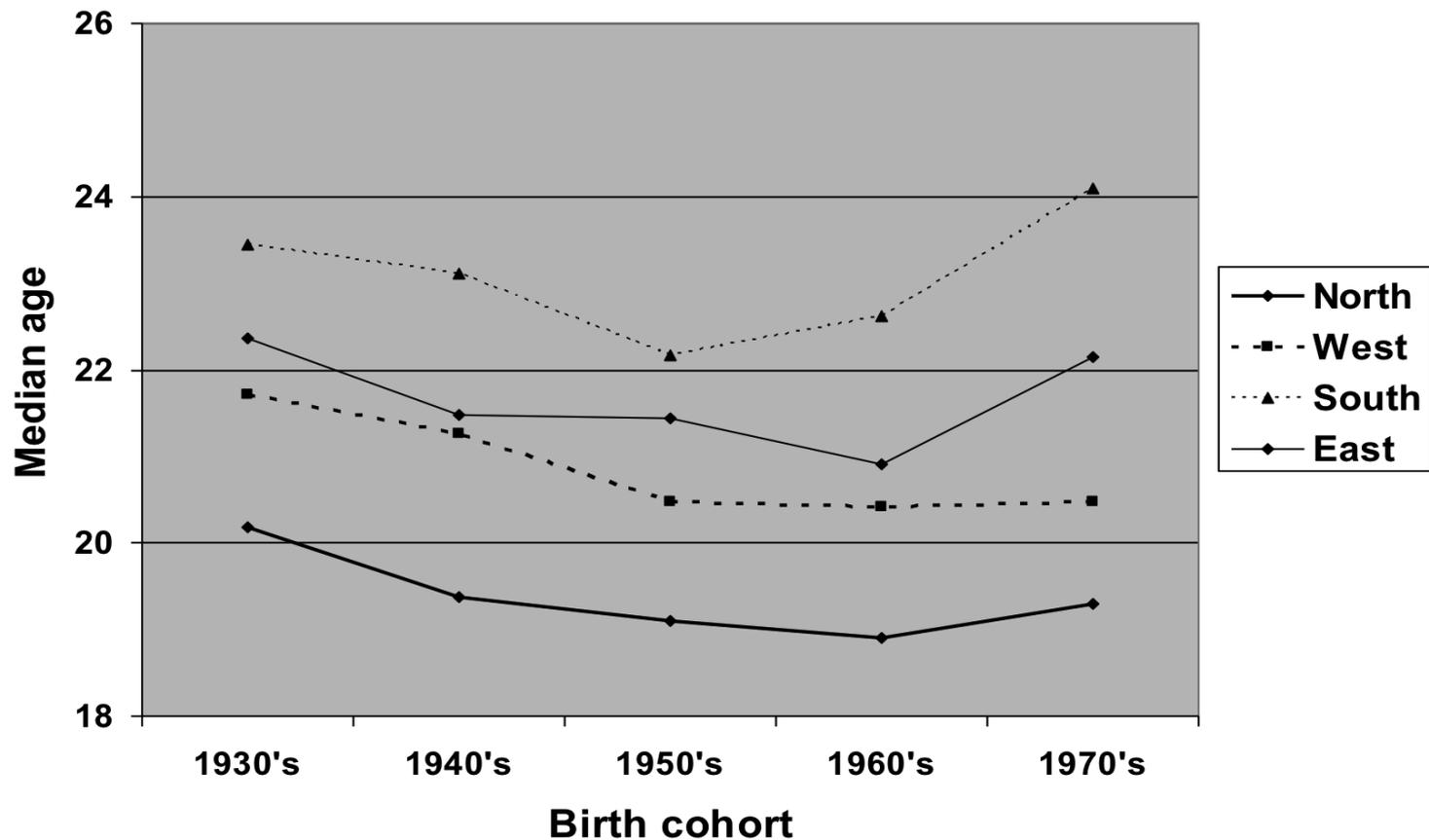
- ⌘ In demography, the transition to adulthood is defined as a process *marked* by a series of life events (in themselves *transitions*)
  - ⌘ *School-to-work transition* (finishing full-time education, beginning to work → economic independence)
  - ⌘ *Household and family formation* (leaving the parental home, forming a union-cohabitation or marriage, becoming a parent)

# Patterns in the transition to adulthood

- The new pattern of transition to adulthood in Europe is (Billari & Liefbroer, 2010):
  - *late* (postponement of events—events tend to take place later)
  - *protracted* (larger distance between first and last event—the transition to adulthood takes longer)
  - *complex* (more diversity in trajectories—higher heterogeneity between individuals)

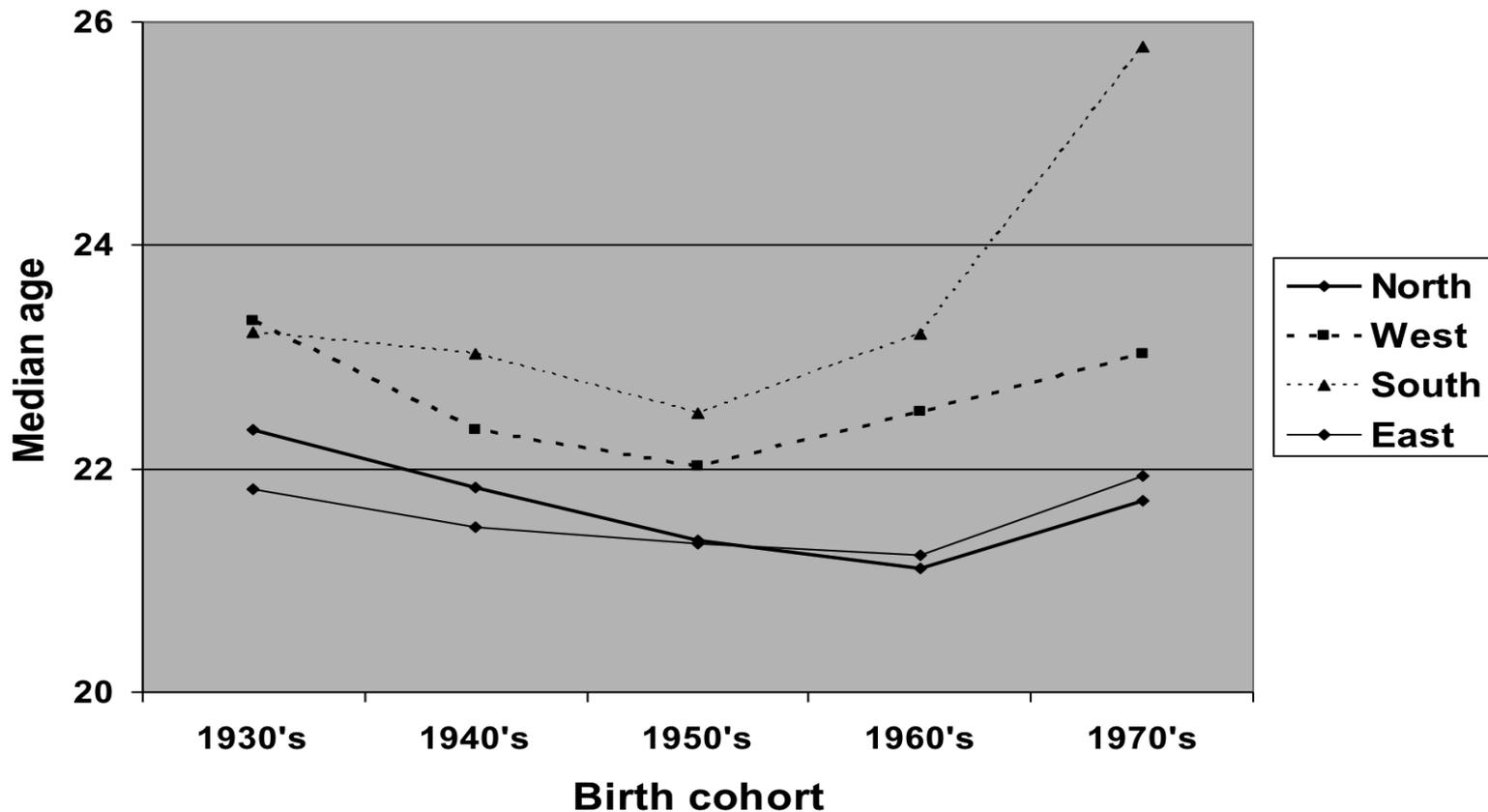
# Patterns in the transition to adulthood

Median age at **leaving home** by cohort, women: European regions. Source: Billari & Liefbroer (2010), ESS data.



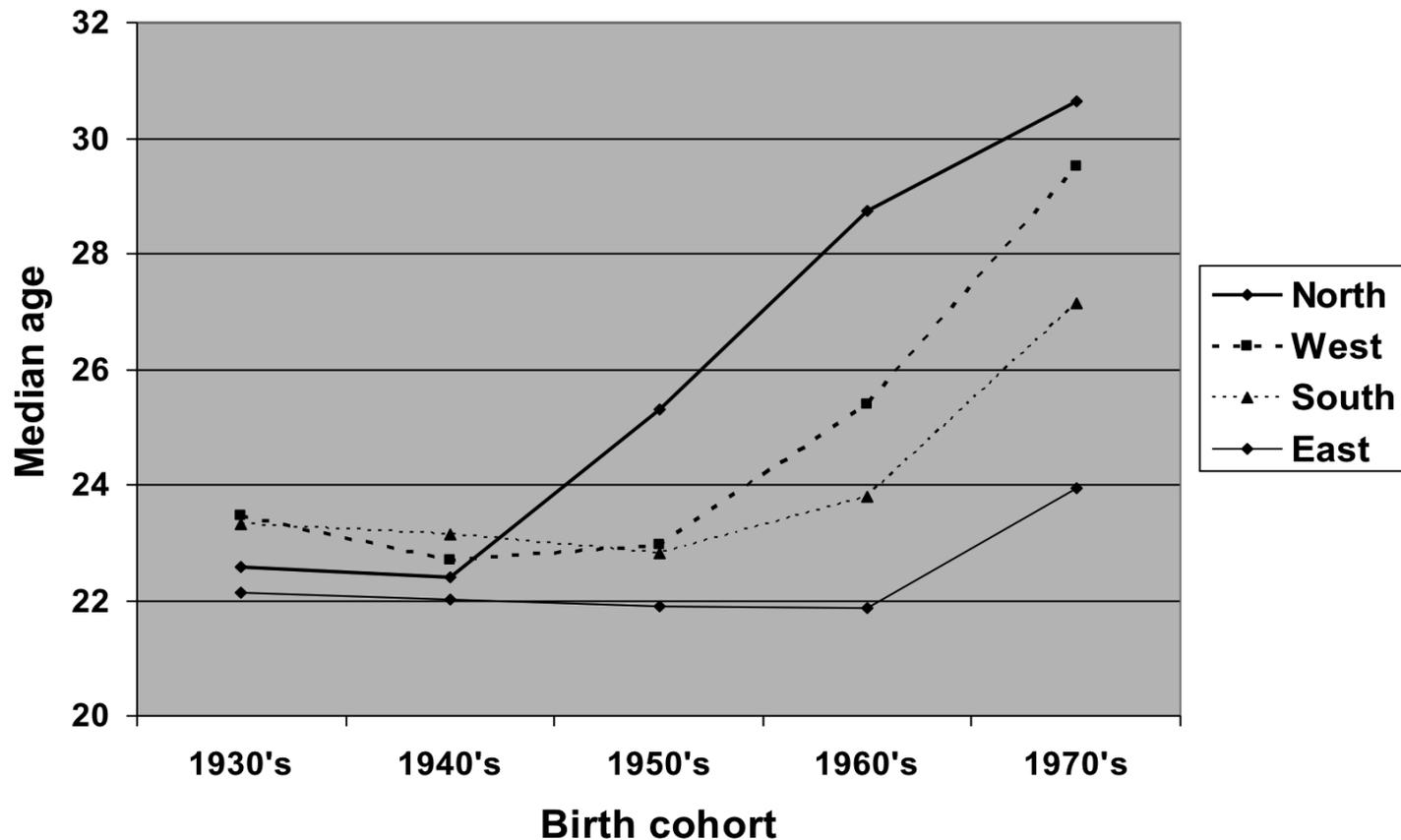
# Patterns in the transition to adulthood

Median age at **first union** by cohort, women: European regions. Source: Billari & Liefbroer (2010), ESS data.



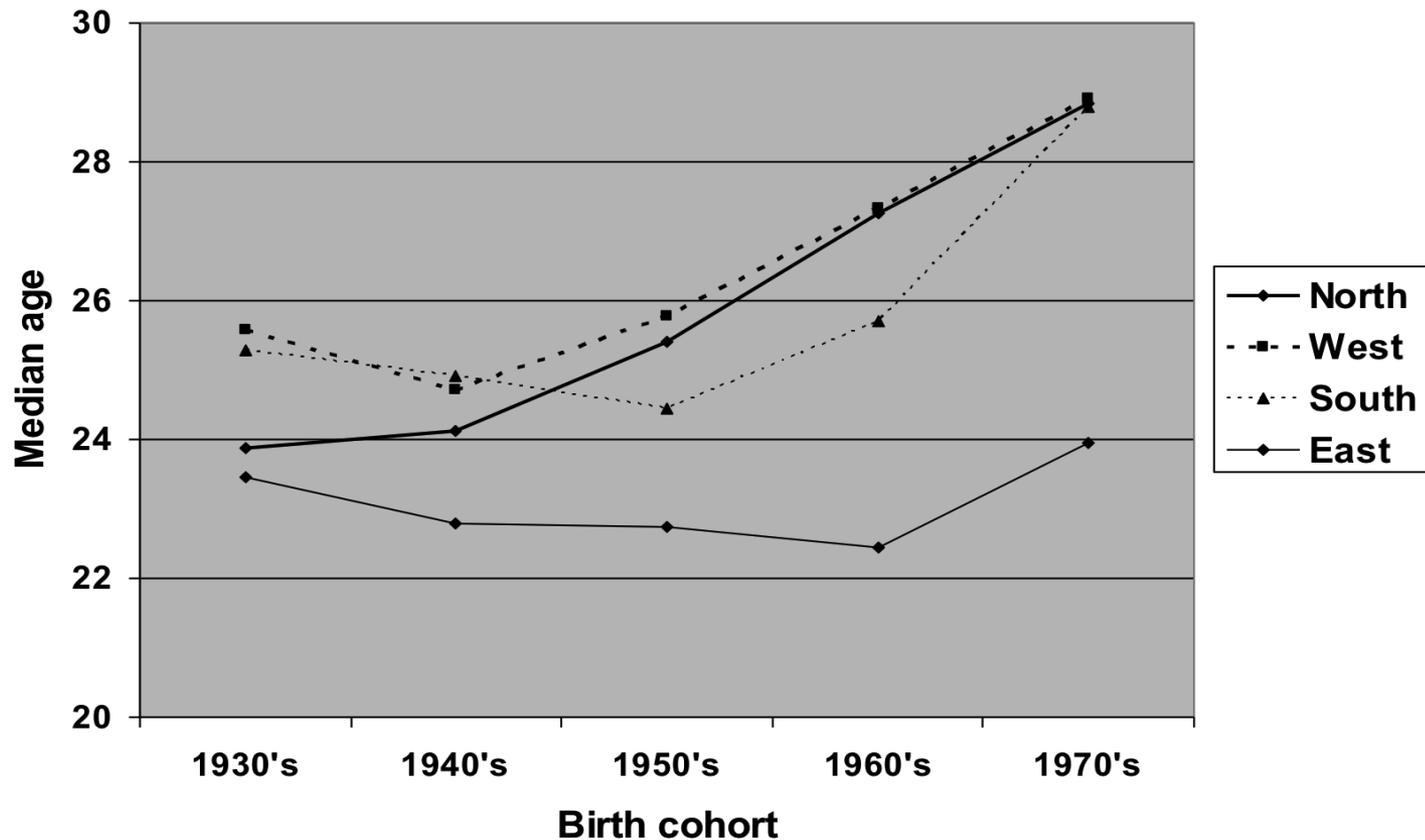
# Patterns in the transition to adulthood

Median age at **first marriage** by cohort, women: European regions. Source: Billari & Liefbroer (2010), ESS data.



# Patterns in the transition to adulthood

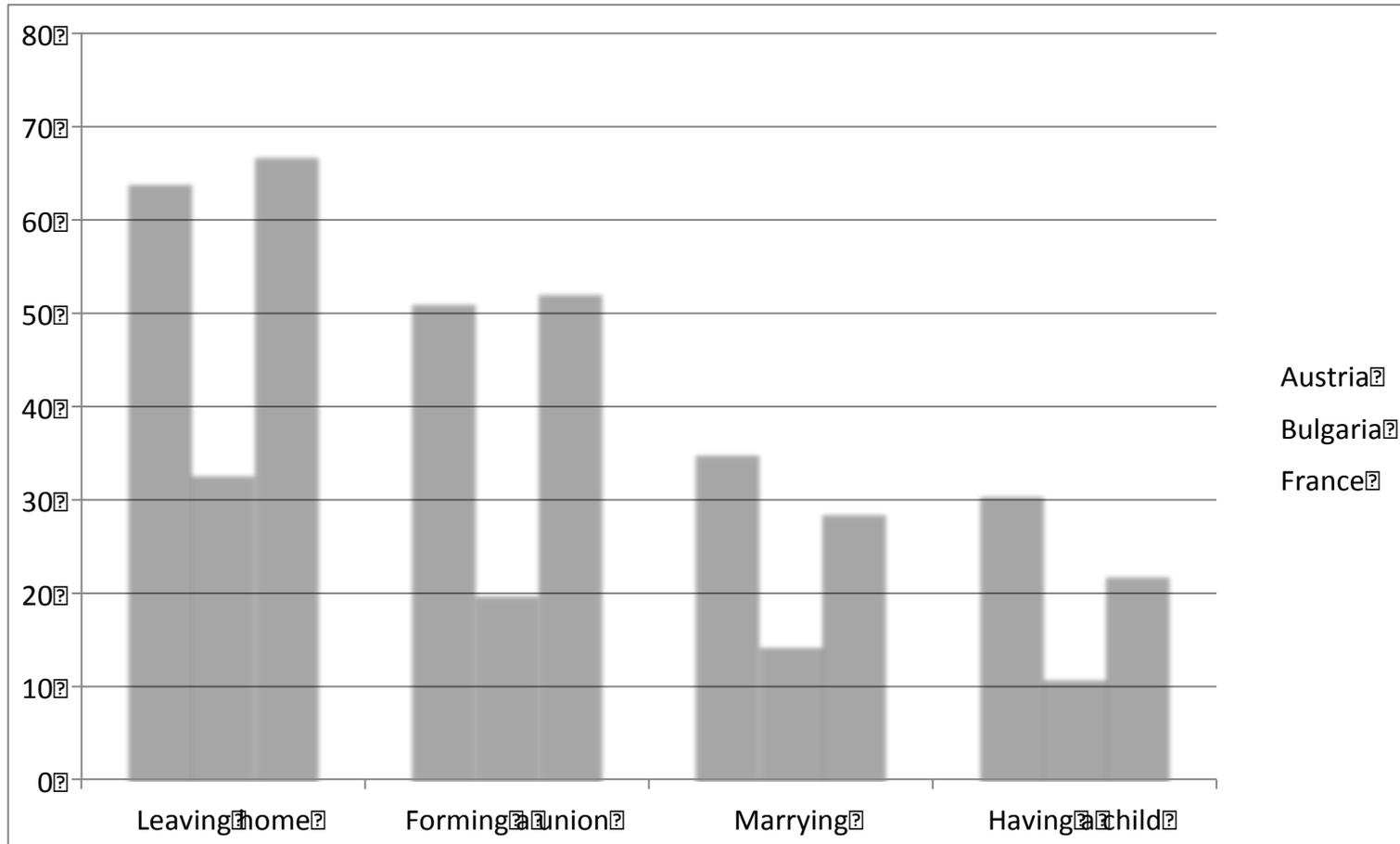
Median age at **parenthood** by cohort, women: European regions. Source: Billari & Liefbroer (2010), ESS data.



# Unequal opportunities

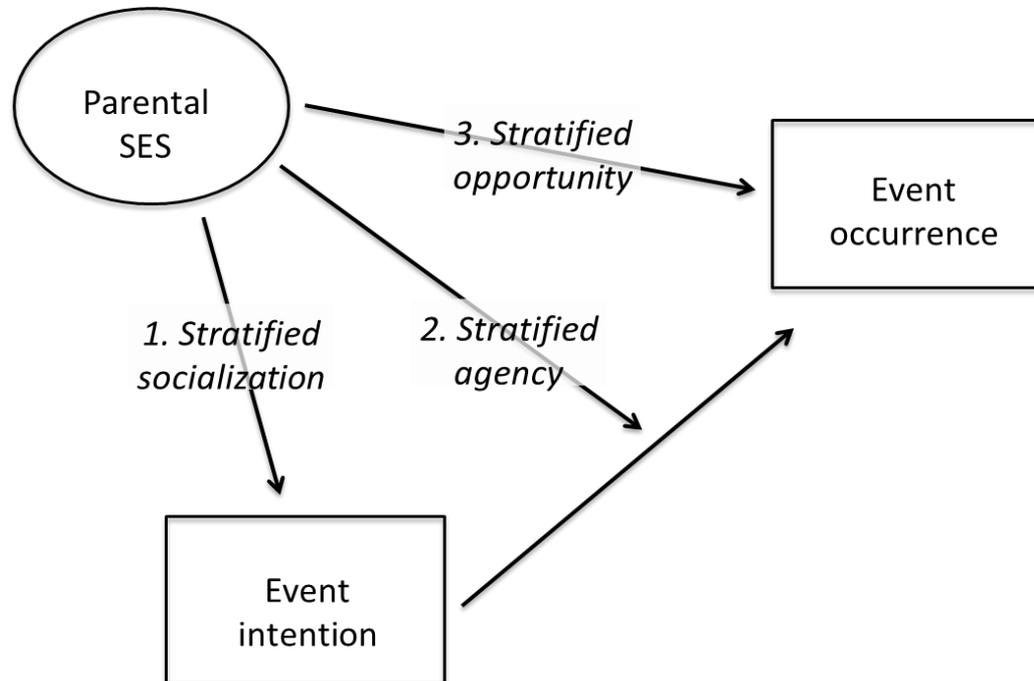
- While also culture is shaping choices, there are inequalities in opportunities to *choose* during the transition to adulthood:
  - Between countries
  - Within countries

# Percentage realising the intention to experience events in the transition to adulthood (3-year interval)



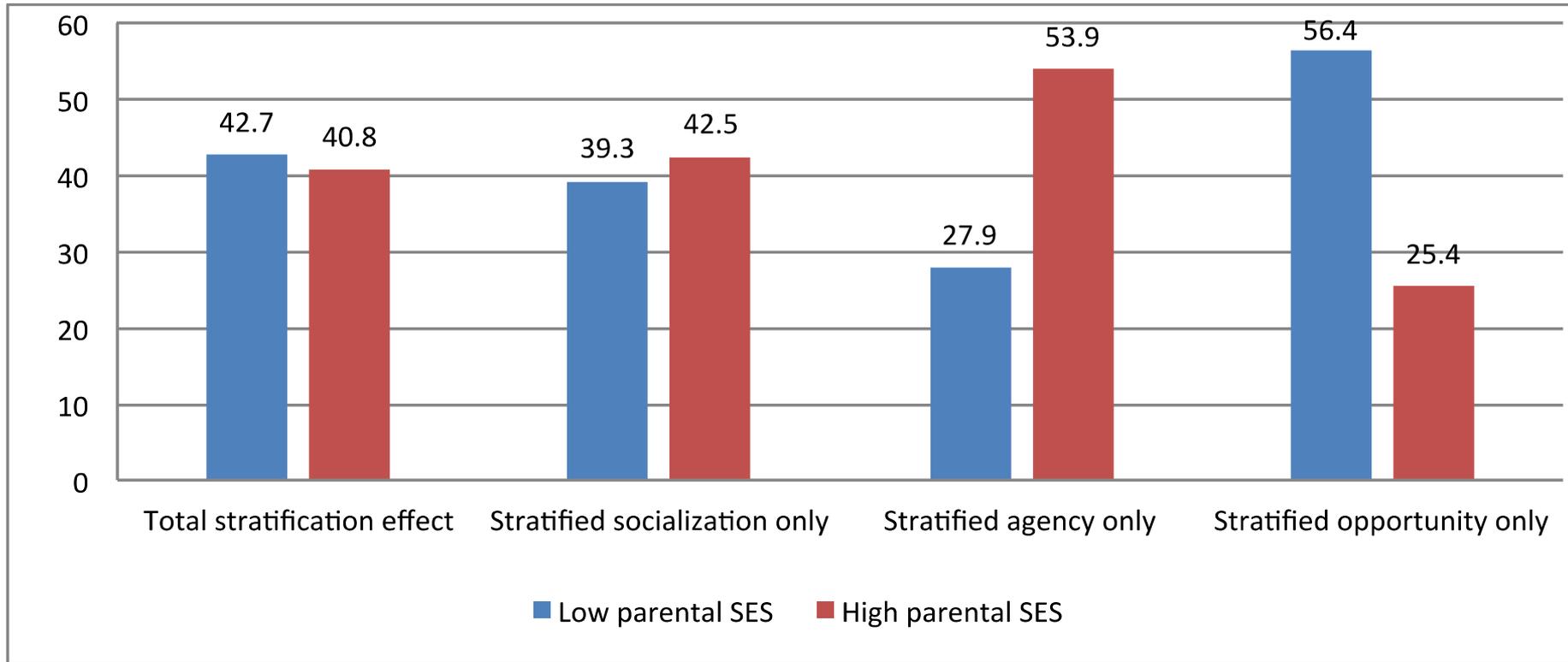
Source: Billari, Hiekel & Liefbroer (2017). Own elaborations on GGS Waves 1 & 2, ages 18-35.

# A view of inequalities in the transition to adulthood



# Effects of parental Socio-Economic Status

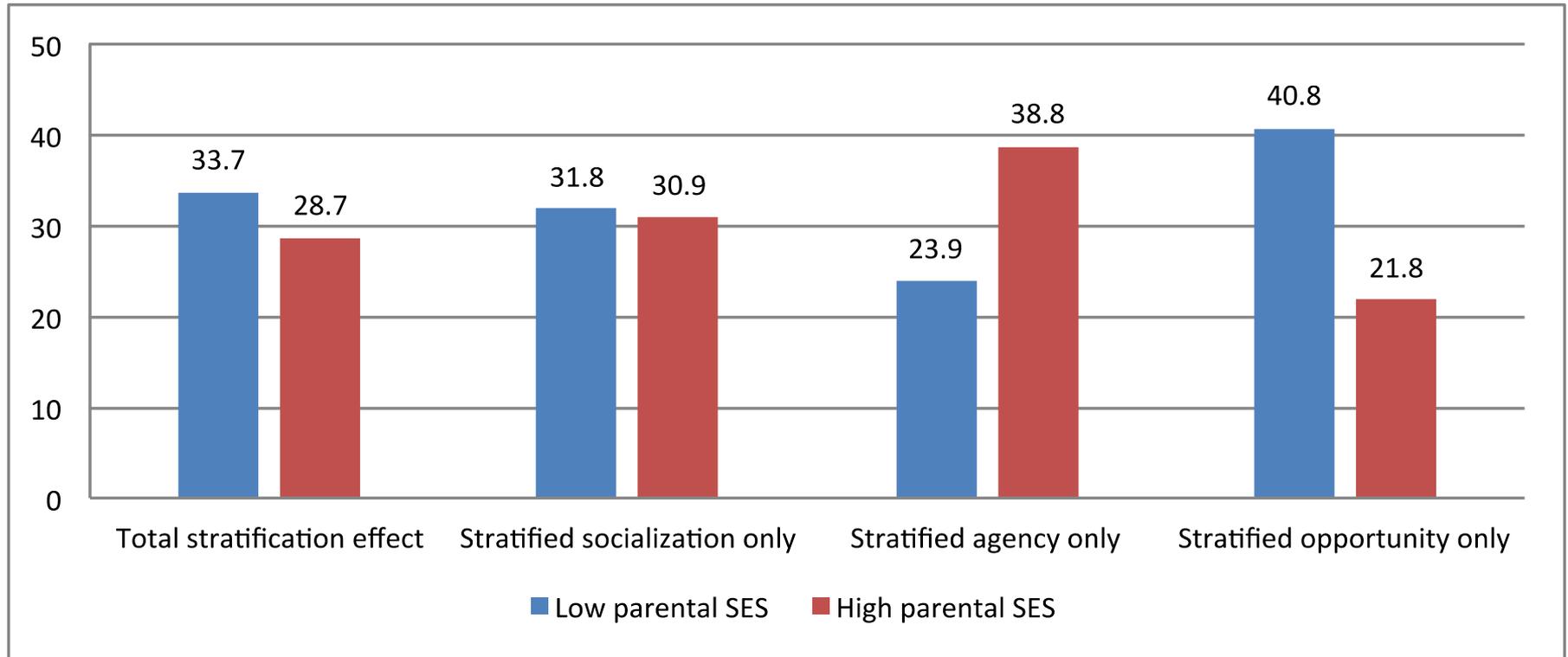
Leaving home



Source: Billari, Hiekel & Liefbroer (2017). Own elaborations on GGS Waves 1 & 2, ages 18-35. Low parental SES: one SD below mean, High parental SES: one SD above mean.

# Effects of parental Socio-Economic Status

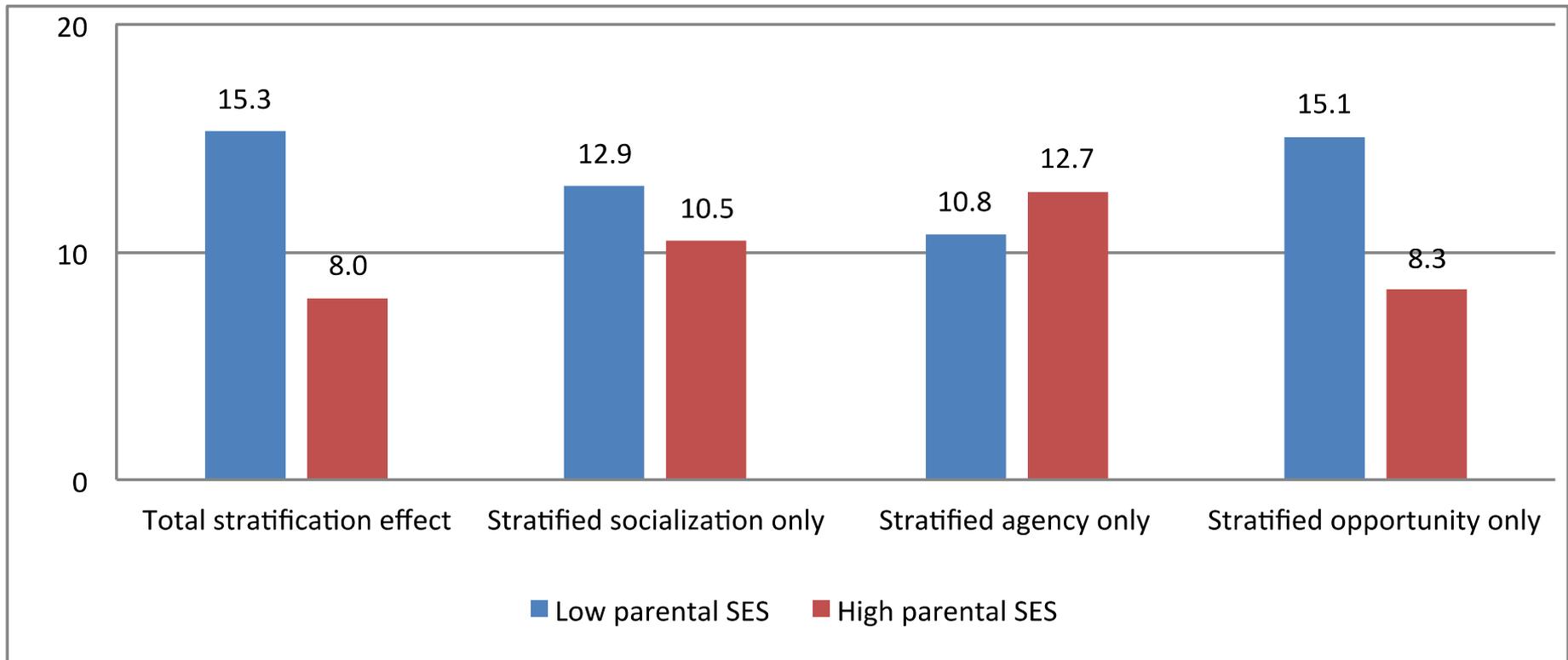
Forming a union



Source: Billari, Hiekel & Liefbroer (2017). Own elaborations on GGS Waves 1 & 2, ages 18-35. Low parental SES: one SD below mean, High parental SES: one SD above mean.

# Effects of parental Socio-Economic Status

Becoming a parent



Source: Billari, Hiekel & Liefbroer (2017). Own elaborations on GGS Waves 1 & 2, ages 18-35. Low parental SES: one SD below mean, High parental SES: one SD above mean.

# Policy implications?

- Youth policies need to adopt a demographic, life-course perspective
- Importance of housing, work, education, family policy to support achieving independence (i.e. experiencing events in the transition to adulthood)
- But “one size does not fit all”—diversity within and between countries calls for targeted policies

# References

- Berrington, A., Billari, F.C., Thévenon, O. & Vono de Vilhena, D. 2017. Becoming an Adult in Europe. *Population & Policy Compact. Policy Brief no. 13.*
- Billari, F.C., Hiekel, N. & Liefbroer, A.C. 2017. The Social Stratification of Choice in the Transition to Adulthood. Under review.
- Billari, F.C. & Liefbroer, A.C. 2010. Towards a New Pattern of Transition to Adulthood? *Advances in Life Course Research* 15: 59-75.

# Acknowledgments

- This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, projects ConOpp – Context of Opportunity (grant agreement n° 324178), PI: Liefbroer and DisCont - Discontinuities in Household and Family Formation (grant agreement n° 694262), PI: Billari.
- Berrington's et al. publication funded by the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement n° 739511 for the project “Generations and Gender Programme: Evaluate, Plan, Initiate”.

CON / OPP

Dis

cont \*\*\*

Thank you!



@FCBillari