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Multi-Dimensional Subjective Wellbeing, Gender and the Determinants of Lone Parenthood for Men and Women in Flanders following Divorce.

An investigation of the multi-dimensional subjective well-being of lone mothers and fathers following divorce and the determinants of lone parenthood.

PhD Candidate Sam Jenkinson

Promotor: Prof. dr. Koenraad Matthijs

Co-Promotor: Dr. Hideko Matsuo

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1. Introduction

Lone parent families in Belgium have become increasingly economically vulnerable since the 2008 financial crisis (Eurostat 2017). In 2015 single parent families in Belgium, who are typically, but increasingly not uniquely, a mother and children, face a 36% greater chance of being defined as living in monetary poverty, which is characterised as subsisting on a monthly income below €1,085 for a single person and €2,279 for a couple with two children (Statistics-Belgium, 2015). More broadly, they face a 51% increased chance of social exclusion, defined as monetary poverty, severe material deprivation, or detachment from the labour market (Statistics-Belgium, 2015). This figure for single parent families at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Belgium is higher than the European average and increased for some time following the financial crisis, as can be seen from figure 1 (Eurostat 2017). These families therefore are highly economically vulnerable, making research concerning the determinants of this family structure and also their wellbeing, in the midst of increasing economic uncertainty, of particular interest from both an academic and policy perspective.

Research concerning the wellbeing and determinants of lone parenthood, including both mothers and fathers, is increasingly important also because of their rising numbers and changing gender composition. The 2011 European Population and Housing Census (Eurostat 2011) showed that single parent households, defined as households with children and only one resident parent, make up on average 16% of all households across Europe. The majority of single parent households, at 13.4% across Europe, are female headed, but with increasing numbers of male headed lone parent households, as well as significant variations between and within countries. In Belgium the number of lone parents is 16% nationally, but higher in predominantly urban regions, including 24.3% in Brussels (Eurostat 2011). The majority of lone parent families in Belgium remain female, at 13.1% of all households and 2.9% for men in 2011 (Eurostat, 2011).

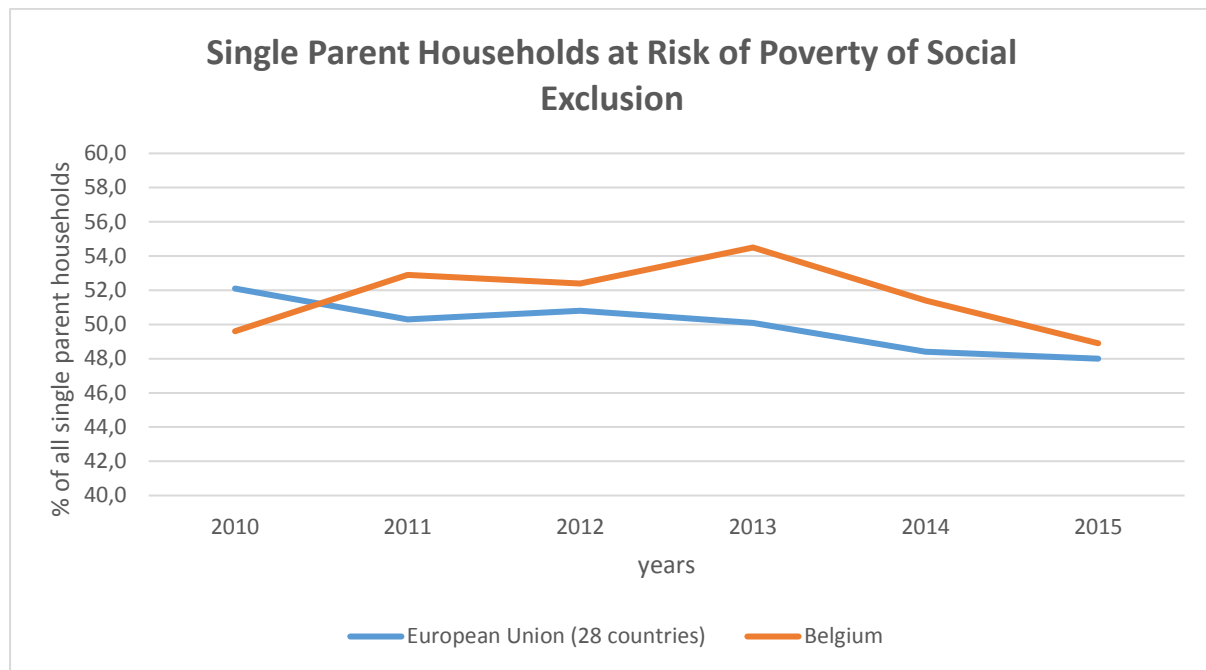


Figure 1 Source: Eurostat (Eurostat, 2017)

The difficulties these families face can have a major impact on the subjective wellbeing of the parents. As has been described by the Belgian Children's commissioner, Bruno Vannobbergen; "the challenging financial situation forces them to be stuck in survival mode", responding to challenging day to day obstacles, with little time to plan for the future (Furniere, 2017).

This has implications for the current wellbeing of these families, but also, worryingly, may have the potential to affect the future opportunities of the children of these families through lower parenting resources and increased potential emotional stress for children. Here evidence again shows problematic patterns in Belgium with regards to the children of lone parents; a study looking at educational achievement gaps in mathematics across industrialised countries between children from single and two parent families for 15 year old students found the largest achievement gap in Belgium (Woessmann, 2015). In this sense it is vital to understand not only the determinants of this family structure, but also how different policies, such as a legal preference for co-parenting which may lead to less instability and a more equal division of parenting time and resources, may alleviate the difficulties that they face and increase their wellbeing.

Belgium is also a highly relevant country for analysis of lone parenthood following divorce in light of its high rates of divorce and also its liberal divorce laws (Basaits & Mortelmans, 2017). Between 2002 and 2008 the crude Belgian divorce rate was between 2.8 and 3.3, declining only relatively recently to 2.3 (Pasteels & Mortelmans, 2017; Eurostat, 2015). By comparison, the figure for the EU28 has only passed 2.0 between 2005 and 2007 and was 1.9 at the last time full figures were available (Eurostat

2015). These high rates of divorce mean a large number of families can be expected to experience the transition from divorce to a period of lone parenthood.

Of further interest from a Belgian perspective is the policy of legal preference for joint physical custody, which became the norm in Belgium in 2006. It represents a policy preference for children to reside physically with both parents (Basaits & Mortelmans, 2017). It has been linked to improved child outcomes, including better self-esteem, lower problem behaviour, and a more equal division of parenting between ex partners (Melli, 1999). It is of particular interest here as a determinant of lone parent wellbeing, as any association between a more equal division of parenting and higher lone maternal or paternal wellbeing would be highly relevant from a policy perspective.

2. Theoretical framework

This section will begin with the theoretical approach taken to subjective wellbeing, before outlining the justification for studying its relationship to lone parenthood. It will then continue with an explanation of how lone parenting may influence the subjective wellbeing of men and women separately. It will consider gender specific parenting norms, but also how this may be expected to be changing through trends associated with the gender revolution (Goldscheider, et al., 2015) and also new policies representing a more equal division of parenting labour, such as joint custody and co-parenting.

Following this it will move on to look at the theoretical determinants of lone parenthood following divorce. It will begin by considering the diverging destinies hypothesis and how education is influencing different partnership trajectories. It will then examine how men and women re-partner differently following divorce. Following this it will outline a life course approach and seek to consider how the different early life conditions and also transitions to adulthood experienced by mothers and fathers may influence the differing incidences and durations of lone parenthood following divorce. Finally it will outline why these patterns may have changed over time and the need to take account of a cohort and period analysis in order to capture this transformation.

2.1 Theoretical framework part 1: Subjective wellbeing and lone parenthood

2.1.1 An approach to wellbeing beyond income

An assessment or model of someone's true wellbeing requires more than just knowing if they have the basic economic resources to satisfy their rudimentary needs (Krueger & Schkade, 2008; Clark & Senik, 2011; Michaelson, et al., 2009; Thomson & Marks, 2008). In this respect this research will take an approach influenced by positive psychology, the economics of happiness and also sociology to

argue that measures such as GDP and income alone are not broad enough to measure living standards and therefore do not fully capture someone's true quality of life. This research will argue that they are only capable of measuring whether someone does, or does not, have the basic resources required to satisfy their needs; not if they actually do or how they themselves perceive their own wellbeing. It will argue that approaches which only take account of economic indicators of someone's wellbeing do not take into account what people do with these resources, or other external factors such as constraints or challenges in their lives, such as parenting alone, which may impact their actual experience of happiness or wellbeing in ways unmeasured by monetary indicators.

These economic indicators are typically used as part of a dominant preference satisfaction theoretical model of wellbeing, which assumes that each individual given enough resources will be able to satisfy their preferences, and therefore, their basic needs (Thomson & Marks, 2008). It is a rational actor utility model; it assumes that all individuals need to be happy is sufficient resources and the freedom to satisfy their preferences in order to prosper (Thomson & Marks, 2008).

Research has shown however that resources and the freedom to make decisions alone are not reliable indicators of an individual's wellbeing or happiness. An individual's choices are not consistent predictors of what makes people happy; there is evidence that increased choice does not always lead to positive outcomes and also economic measures are arguably only proxies for someone's lived experience (Wilson & Gilbert, 2005; Schwarz, et al., 2005; Easterlin, 1974). The clearest example of this is with regard to income and the Easterlin hypothesis (Easterlin, 1974), in which happiness is shown to increase with rises in income, but only until a certain point. From there on the gains received from each additional growth in income decrease, supposedly due to associated increases in aspiration and changes in the psychological reference group to whom individuals compare themselves (Easterlin, 2001).

In short, someone may have the sufficient financial resources and the theoretical freedom to satisfy one's preferences, but still may not actually be happy, suggesting other barriers and determinants to an individual's subjective wellbeing need to be examined. It is the position of this research that subjective wellbeing measures, therefore, may bring a much broader and more accurate assessment of an individual's true wellbeing. They rely on an individual's own account, and are therefore, arguably, more telling of someone's real welfare.

2.1.2 Happiness, satisfaction and flourishing, the different measures and dimensions of subjective wellbeing

Measures of subjective wellbeing are considered to fall into three different but overlapping theoretical areas, hedonic, eudemonic and cognitive measures (Krueger & Schkade, 2008; Clark & Senik, 2011; Michaelson, et al., 2009; Thomson & Marks, 2008; Diener, 1984; Dolan & Metcalfe, 2012; Kahneman & Deaton, 2010). Hedonic measures are typically an individual's own subjective assessment of their overall happiness, also described as emotional wellbeing, positive affect, or experienced happiness (Ifcher & Zarghamee, 2013). This is either an assessment at a particular time or period of time, such as how often an individual felt sad, happiness, or pleasure. Cognitive measures are evaluative measures, including people's assessments of their life satisfaction, either as an overall measure, or over a particular part of their life, such as their health or social life.

Eudemonic measures, however, are seen to capture broader areas of wellbeing. They use multiple items to create measures representing what has been described as an individual's ability to "flourish" (Thomson & Marks, 2008; Michaelson, et al., 2009; Clark & Senik, 2011; Kashdan, et al., 2008). The term eudemonia originates from Aristotle and signifies the ability to "live the good life" (Clark & Senik, 2011; Aristotle, 1962). In the study of wellbeing it represents measures which are designed to capture, for example, an individual's sense of purpose and capabilities (Clark & Senik, 2011).

What this means in more concrete terms is, for example, someone's openness to learning, vitality and motivation, engagement with their work and their embeddedness within communities, which taken together are said to describe an individual's ability to flourish or live well (Thomson & Marks, 2008; Jeffrey, et al., 2014).

More practically this can be understood by the following examples of survey items used in a framework developed by Clark and Senik (2011) and based on research by both the New Economics Foundation (Michaelson, et al., 2009), and Huppert & So (Huppert & So, 2009);

Table 1 Eudemonic measures (Clark & Senik 2011)

Engagement	I love learning new things
Meaning	I generally feel that what I do in my life is valuable and worthwhile
Self Esteem	In general I feel very positive about myself
Optimism	I am always optimistic about my future
Resilience	When things go wrong in my life it generally takes me a long time to get back to normal
Positive Relationships	There are people in my life who really care about me

This PhD seeks to use measures of wellbeing from all three of these areas; hedonic (happiness), cognitive (evaluative) and eudemonic (flourishing) measures. This enables an assessment of these differences between male and female lone parent families, in comparison to each other, but also other family types both with and without children. In doing so it will provide insightful evidence for how the intersections of gender, parenting and relationship statuses interact and inform the different associations between this family structure and wellbeing.

2.1.3 Why study subjective wellbeing and lone parenthood?

There is an increasing body of evidence which indicates that lone parents fare worse than married parents in reported measures of subjective wellbeing (Baronowska-Rataj, et al., 2014; Brown & Morgan, 1997; Cairney, et al., 2003; Meirer, et al., 2016; Herbst, 2012; McLanahan & Adams, 1989). Studies using subjective wellbeing, however, have typically focused on single dimensions of wellbeing (hedonic or cognitive), largely focused on women (Dykstra & Keizer, 2009), rarely considered both lone mothers and fathers, and often struggled to disentangle the impact on subjective wellbeing of relationship status (being single) from parenting status (parenting alone), and with sometimes conflicting results (Baronowska-Rataj, et al., 2014; Dykstra & Keizer, 2009; Herbst, 2012). This study will incorporate a number of advancements on previous research. By incorporating multiple dimensions of subjective wellbeing, we can gain a detailed insight/understanding into the quality of life experienced by these families, arguably better capturing the details of their lives more completely than by using economic indicators alone. In addition, by using multiple measurements of subjective wellbeing, we overcome the tendency to focus on single item measures giving a much broader snapshot across different dimensions of subjective wellbeing. This study will also incorporate the study of lone fathers to examine how gender influences the experience of parenting alone more broadly. And finally, we seek to disentangle the impact of relationship status from parenting status, to attempt to examine which factor is having the biggest impact on the subjective wellbeing of lone parents.

2.1.4 Parenting, lone parenting and subjective wellbeing

When understanding how lone parenthood may affect subjective wellbeing, it is important to begin with an understanding of how parenthood itself affects subjective wellbeing and how this differs for men and women.

In this respect major life events, such as becoming a parent or experiencing a divorce, can have a long lasting impact on subjective wellbeing (Lucas, 2005; Luhmann, et al., 2012). These events involve alterations to lifestyles and circumstances, which may potentially be positive or negative towards

subjective wellbeing. This may be a temporary phenomenon following which an individual's levels may recover (Luhmann, et al., 2012), or alternatively it may be a permanent adjustments to an individual's baseline level of subjective wellbeing (Spini, et al., 2017).

This is a much studied topic, see for example Umberson, Pudrovska & Reczek (2010), however the size and direction of its relationship with subjective wellbeing is somewhat unclear. Several studies have shown a positive relationship between parenthood and subjective wellbeing, with increases in measures of life satisfaction and self-esteem (Aassve, et al., 2012; Hansen, et al., 2009; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003). Conversely, other studies have shown a negative relationship, citing increasing conflict between different life roles and a lack of time, financial pressures and declining intimacy (Alesina, et al., 2004; Twenge, et al., 2003; Myrskylä & Margolis, 2014; Parr, 2010).

These studies also show that much of the higher life satisfaction attributed to parenting is due to self-selection of happy couples into parenthood (Myrskylä & Margolis, 2014; Parr, 2010). These studies also showed declines in wellbeing following parenthood, though new evidence shows an inverted u shape trajectory, with increases around the time of birth being followed by declines to levels below the pre-birth levels (Bernadi, et al., 2017). This relationship is important for this research. Many of the burdens parents experience, including a lack of leisure and time will be amplified for lone parents and will be of importance for explaining differences between those single divorcees with and without children.

In addition to these potential ways parenting may impact wellbeing, lone parenting poses many additional obstacles for both men and women. Parenting alone can mean having greater difficulty trying to combine work and family life, due to losing a co-parent, as well as being single which can lead to loneliness, increased stress, unhappiness and lower wellbeing (Baronowska-Rataj, et al., 2014; Brown & Morgan, 1997; Cairney, et al., 2003; Cairney, et al., 1999; Cairney, et al., 2006; Cooper, et al., 2008; Hope, et al., 1999; Lipman, et al., 1997; Meadows, 2009; McLanahan & Adams, 1989).

2.1.5 Motherhood, "Intensive motherhood" and subjective wellbeing

Much of the literature on parenting, wellbeing and gender has looked at mothers specifically (Umbertson, 1989). Where studies have considered both genders, they often shown a more intense relationship between mothers and their children, meaning they are perhaps more likely to experience the strains associated with parenting (Nomaguchi, et al., 2005; Mattingly & Sayer, 2006).

A highly important piece of this research which shows this relationship has been described as the concept of "Intensive Mothering" (Hays, 1996; Singh, 2004; Nomaguchi, et al., 2005). This has been characterised as a self-perception by mothers, but also society more broadly, that they hold and feel

a greater responsibility for the success or failings of their children, and that it has a greater impact on their subjective wellbeing (Hays, 1996; Singh, 2004).

This effect is illustrated in both parenting literature and media coverage of parenting which implores mothers to, not only spend more time with their children, but to increase the quality of that time by increasing the level of interaction and educational content in the hope that it will ensure their child's eventual success (Hays, 1996). Indeed this has been linked to increased pressure and stress for mothers and lower maternal wellbeing, and has also been found to be even greater for lone mothers (Nomaguchi, et al., 2005; Hughes, 1989; Bird, 1997; Evenson & Simon, 2005)

This is clearly important for a mothers own sense of subjective wellbeing. Feeling like a poor, or failing parent will likely lead to lower levels of different areas of wellbeing, such as stress , anxiety and depression (Nomaguchi, et al., 2005; Hughes, 1989; Bird, 1997; Evenson & Simon, 2005). Evidence has shown that how public parenting is, and how it is perceived by other key actors, such as other parents and teachers, is important for a mother's sense of wellbeing (Garey, 1999). An insightful example of this concerns parental help with children's homework. In interviews conducted with mothers Garey (1999) argues that activities such as help with homework are almost viewed as symbolically important, regardless of the actual time overall a parent might spend with their child. They argued that guaranteeing a child did well in their homework ensured that teachers and parents of other children saw that a mother was a good parent and their child was successful; whereas in contrast to this, mothers whose child was underperforming viewed it as a reflection on their own failing as a parent and affected their own sense of subjective wellbeing (Garey, 1999; Singh, 2004).

Parenting often also affects mothers more because they appear to be more likely to rearrange their personal and professional lives to facilitate parenting, which may cause greater upheaval and stress (Hynes & Clarkberg 2005, Sanchez & Thomson 1997). Mothers are often more likely to alter their lifestyle or labour supply in response to the birth of a child, prioritising their family over their work role (Cinamon & Rich, 2003). This can be seen in reports by mothers of how much their family life interferes with their work life (Byron 2005) and has been found to be more problematic for women than men in terms of fatigue and psychological distress; the cause they argue, being the greater significance of parenthood to mothers than fathers (Reichl, Leiter & Spinath 2014, Simon, 1992).

This persistent societal perception that the responsibility for any failing of a child is owned more greatly by a mother has implications for the wellbeing of single mothers who are likely to be more greatly affected (Nomaguchi, et al., 2005; Hughes, 1989; Bird, 1997; Evenson & Simon, 2005). They face greater time constraints parenting alone and are likely to believe that any difficulties their child

faces are their own responsibility, facing a greater burden than other mothers (Hughes, 1989; Bird, 1997; Evenson & Simon, 2005; Cunningham & Knoester, 2007).

2.1.6 Is parenting becoming increasingly important to men? The second gender revolution

An important research question therefore highlighted above is whether men and women feel the pressures and strains of parenting in the same way. This is of fundamental importance to this study, as if this is the case, then it can be reasonably argued that their experiences of the relationship between lone parenthood and subjective wellbeing, a situation where the pressures of parenting may become more intense, may be more likely to be similar. If, however, they do feel the pressures differently, then one has to explain why this is the case.

One important contributory factor is arguably the differing importance of “successful parenting” to the fulfilment of their gender specific roles and identity (Townsend, 2002; Nomaguchi, et al., 2005). As highlighted above, women may feel the pressures of parenting more greatly due to greater societal expectations of motherhood and gender specific expectations (Hays, 1996; Singh, 2004). This therefore requires a theoretical approach which understands how important being a successful parent is to both men and women and how it may differ and have changed over time.

To understand how this may have changed over time, this research will therefore consider the “gender revolution” (Goldscheider et al 2015) theoretical framework for understanding the second demographic transition (SDT). It argues that there are two important gender revolutions which have occurred, firstly in the labour market, and now secondly, they argue, in the home.

The first revolution they refer to concerns the entrance of women into the labour market, creating greater gender equity in the world of work. This disrupted the domestic division of labour, creating greater female independence from marriage and thus the increasing rates of divorce witnessed in the latter half of the 20th century in many countries.

This greater gender equality in the labour market they argue is leading to a second gender revolution. This second gender revolution involves men increasingly becoming involved within the home and taking a greater responsibility for parenting and the domestic division labour.

If this is the case and men are now taking greater responsibilities for parenting than ever before, it is highly important for this PhD research question. This second gender revolution would indicate increasing paternal involvement and therefore quite likely an increasing centrality of fatherhood to men’s gender specific roles. Succinctly, if parenting is becoming increasingly central to men’s identity

relative to women's, it may be expected that they will feel the strains and pressures of parenting alone also in a similar fashion to how mothers feel it, as described in the previous section.

2.1.7 Fatherhood, "involved fatherhood" and wellbeing

Successful parenthood therefore is potentially an increasingly important determinant of fathers levels of subjective wellbeing, in light of the second gender revolution (Goldscheider, et al., 2015). This can indeed be seen in the literature on fatherhood and subjective wellbeing, but in a subtly different way to mothers. "Involved fathering" (Townsend, 2002) is a concept representing an increasing cultural encouragement from the 1990s onwards for fathers to seek greater involvement in parenting with their children. Evidence has shown that fathers do feel the need to spend more time with their children in activities, and that this has been found to be an important contributor to their sense of wellbeing and status (Townsend, 2002; Milkie, et al., 2010).

It has been argued, however, that it is still only important as part of a broader "package deal" of gender roles contributing to their sense of wellbeing and identity (Townsend, 2002; Milkie, et al., 2010; Dykstra & Keizer, 2009). What this means is that whilst being a successful father is increasingly important to men's subjective wellbeing, it is only one of a broader number of roles, including husband and breadwinner (Townsend, 2002; Milkie, et al., 2010; Dykstra & Keizer, 2009).

Evidence with regards to this has been conflicting. A study looking at the differences in fathers wellbeing found that relationship status and relationship history was a more important determinant of wellbeing (Dykstra & Keizer, 2009). Whilst fathers in this study, regardless of partnership status or history, had higher incomes and greater involvement in relationships and networks than non-fathers, it was their partnership status and history which was the more important determinant of their psychological wellbeing. This is suggestive therefore that for men, the biggest detractor for their wellbeing may be being relationship status and history, rather than parenting (Dykstra & Keizer, 2009).

This evidence concerning relationship status as the primary determinant of fathers subjective wellbeing, and not parenting status, highlights another highly relevant point that this PHD will seek to address. This concerns how to disentangle the association between being single (relationship status) from parenting alone (fatherhood status) when analysing the wellbeing of lone parents.

Marriage provides emotional benefits to both partners including the fulfilment of social expectations, support and a sense of obligation and meaning in life (Gove, et al., 1983; Ross & Huber, 1990; House, et al., 1988; Waite & Gallagher, 2000; Simon, 1997). Indeed some evidence has shown that in some studies the difference between married and single parents reported levels of subjected wellbeing is

statistically indistinguishable from the gap reported between married parents and childless single men and women (Dykstra & Keizer, 2009; Ifcher & Zarghamee, 2013).

2.1.8 Co-parenting and parental wellbeing

Co-parenting implies a more equal division of parental labour, implying a lesser burden on lone mothers, but also an opportunity for fathers to more greatly fulfil their parental role with greater “involved fatherhood” (Townsend, 2002). In addition it has been shown to lead to better child outcomes and therefore fewer child behavioural and social problems, potentially leading to less stress for parents (Bauserman, 2002; Melli, 1999). This may therefore have a beneficial impact on parental subjective wellbeing.

Feeling like a successful parent is an important determinant of happiness. Indeed, evidence has shown that parents who feel unsatisfied with this part of their lives report lower levels of wellbeing (Rogers & White, 1998). Co-parenting has been shown to lead to better child outcomes due to more time for parenting, a better parent child relationship and overall better parenting techniques including both control and encouragement (Basaits, et al., 2012). This means that parents in a co-parenting arrangement may experience lower stress resulting from child problems than lone parents and report higher levels of subjective wellbeing.

Joint physical custody may also lead to better parental subjective wellbeing by stabilising the parent child relationship in a form more closely resembling that when parents were married and therefore less disruption. Indeed, evidence has shown that when both parents remain more greatly involved following divorce their wellbeing is increased relative to those who do not (Amato, 2000; Eggerbeen & Knoester, 2001; Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000).

In addition joint custody represents a more equal division of parenting roles. With regards to fathers this gives them more opportunity to fulfil a vital part of their gender roles, as mentioned above. However it also means a greater parenting burden, more closely to that of lone mothers, and therefore may increase stress and potentially lower levels of subjective wellbeing. With regards to mothers co-parenting means a lesser burden of parenting which may lead to increased subjective wellbeing through more time for leisure and therefore can be expected to increase their levels of reported subjective wellbeing in comparison to lone parents.

2.2 Theoretical framework part 2: life course determinants of lone parenthood

2.2.1 Education, lone motherhood, the diverging destinies hypothesis and the life course

The second part of this PhD will examine how different factors over the life course may influence the incidence and duration of lone parenthood following divorce, and also how this has changed over time. This involves considering factors which may increase the likelihood of divorce, as well as those which may decrease the propensity to re-partner and remain re-partnered thereafter.

2.2.2 Diverging destinies and lone motherhood

Here we consider the theory of “Diverging Destinies” (McLanahan, 2004), specifically the role of education, both one’s own and one’s parents, in influencing relationship stability over the life course, as well as how different transitions to adulthood affect later life relationship stability. An individual’s level of education, their parents’ level of education, and their socioeconomic status, have been shown to be highly associated with greater relationship stability over the life course in the US (Amato, 1996; Amato, 2000; Amato & Kane, 2011; Cherlin, 2014; McLanahan & Percheski, 2008; McLanahan, 2009). This was observed that highly divergent patterns of family behaviour are emerging for many women, which deviate starkly in relation to both socio-economic status and education. Women with greater levels of education were increasingly delaying marriage, fertility and increasing their labour force participation. These women also, on the whole, experience greater levels of family stability and overall wellbeing. In contrast to this, women with lower levels of education were experiencing higher levels of family turbulence, labour market insecurity and lower wellbeing. They are having greater levels of young, pre-marital and multi-partnered fertility and had greater likelihood of lone motherhood and its attendant consequences.

The theoretical mechanism behind the “diverging destinies” is that women with a higher education delay union formation and fertility (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1996; McLanahan & Bumpass, 1998) thus allowing them to a) spend more time choosing a partner and b) to be more financially secure and stable at the point of union formation. Conversely, those who leave home early, form their first union early or have their first birth earlier are much more likely to be financially insecure and spend less time choosing a partner, which it is argued may account for their greater union instability.

2.2.2 Early life conditions and the transition to adulthood: parental divorce, earlier fertility, union formation and age of leaving the parental home

Many of the factors which differentiate these women in line with education also relate to the different early life conditions and transitions to adulthood which they have experienced. This refers to experiences of parental relationship instability and earlier ages of union formation, leaving the parental home and also fertility which have been found to be associated with later life relationship instability (Amato, 1996; Amato, 2000; Amato & Kane, 2011; Cherlin, 2014; Cherlin, 2008; McLanahan,

1996; McLanahan & Percheski, 2008; McLanahan, 2004; Stanfors & Scott, 2013; Thomson & Sarah, 2012).

With regards to parental relationship instability, evidence of this intergenerational pattern is not new and not specific to women, with evidence of an intergenerational transmission being found in several developed countries including Germany, Australia, the Netherlands and the US (Amato & Booth, 1991; Bumpass, et al., 1991; McLanahan & Bumpass, 1998; Dieckmen & Engelhardt, 1999; Manting, 2002).

One theoretical argument for this argues that children, both men and women, from families of instability have been shown to potentially learn different family behaviors (Amato & Kane, 2011; Amato, 1996; Amato & Kane, 2011). Children from families of instability, or who have experienced parental relationship styles such as cohabitation, are likely to view the need for marriage and to stay in a relationship as less important than other children (Amato, 2000; Amato, 1996; Amato & Kane, 2011).

In addition to parental relationship instability, children who leave the home early, or have earlier first birth, have also been found to experience greater relationship instability and consequently lone parenthood (Amato, 1996; Amato, 2000; Amato & Kane, 2011; Cherlin, 2014; Cherlin, 2008; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1996; McLanahan & Percheski, 2008; McLanahan, 2004; Stanfors & Scott, 2013; Thomson & Sarah, 2012). The theory behind this argues that these individuals spend less time choosing their partner and are therefore more likely to experience greater relationship instability than those who wait longer (Amato, 1996; Amato & Kane, 2011).

These factors, including earlier first birth and marriage have also been found to be an important part of the intergenerational transmission of divorce. A study comparing the intergenerational transmission of divorce in East and West Germany found that controlling for age of marriage reduced the significance of the divorce transmission variable to nothing indicating a strong link between divorce and earlier marriage (Engelhardt, et al., 2002). In addition other studies have also found earlier and pre-marital fertility to be a factor which increases the risk of divorce, and consequently lone parenthood (Wagner, 1997).

2.2.3 A life course approach

Many of these factors highlighted above relate to the early life conditions, such as parental characteristics, and also different transitions to adulthood, including education and also the timing of marriage, fertility and union formation. They are events which happen early in one's life, but which may still have an impact in one's life course and wellbeing later in one's life.

To answer these questions therefore it is important to take an approach utilising the concept of the “life course” (Elder, 1998). The “life course” approach is defined as an analysis of “a series of age graded events and social roles that are embedded in the social structure and historical change” (Elder 2001). For the purpose of this research it is a consideration of both the timing and sequence of events, but also the forming and breaking of relationships between individuals which are important; namely how individuals who diverge in these respects differ in later stages of life. It is essential to consider “linked lives” and the connection between the parent and the child, but also how the breaking or changing of relationships with ex-partners affects current wellbeing.

2.2.4 Changing relationship instability over time and birth Cohorts

The second demographic transition witnessed increasing rates of divorce and in addition an increasing prevalence and social acceptance of diverse family forms, such as lone parenthood (Lesthaeghe, 2015; Van de Kaa, 1987; Goldscheider, et al., 2015). These changes have occurred at the same time as vast increases in both female education and also female labour force participation (Goldscheider, et al., 2015). Life courses have become more heterogeneous with increased relationship instability and often multiple family forms and diverse relationship trajectories. These changes have occurred across multiple birth cohorts over time amongst and so it is expected that the use of the concept of the birth cohort will be useful in assessing change over time in both the increases in relationship instability following divorce and the changing lengths and durations of spells of lone parenthood.

3. Research questions

The main research objectives for this PhD in light of this theoretical framework are as follows; what are the consequences of divorce and subsequent lone parenthood in terms of different dimensions of subjective wellbeing? It will seek to examine how these consequences vary between men and women, taking into account gender specific parenting norms, but also how policy changes including joint physical custody, representing a more equal division of parental labour, affect any association between lone parenthood and reported levels of subjective wellbeing.

The second major research objective concerns what are the determinants of the incidence and duration of lone parenthood following divorce, taking into account the different early life conditions and the transitions to adulthood experienced by mothers and fathers in Belgium. It will focus on how the incidence and experience of parental relationship instability in early life affects the later life incidence of lone parenthood following divorce. It will look at how the transition to adulthood, including the incidence of premarital cohabitation, age of first union and education, age of first birth in light of the diverging destinies hypothesis, are correlated with the incidence and duration of lone parenthood following divorce. In doing so it will seek to draw a line between the family status of one

generation and their parents, but also their different experience in the transition to adulthood. It will also look at how the propensity and duration of periods of lone parenthood has changed overtime looking across birth cohorts.

3.1 What are the consequences of lone parenthood?

How does lone parenthood following divorce influence reported levels of different dimensions of subjective wellbeing?

- a) How do reported levels of different measures of subjective wellbeing vary by gender for lone parents and across different dimensions of wellbeing? What socio-economic measures such as income, education and age moderate this association?
- b) Does controlling for measures such as joint custody and co-parenting, representing a more equal division of parental labour, have a positive effect on the subjective wellbeing of lone parents
- c) Which is the most important contributory factor to the lower levels of subjective wellbeing reported by lone parents, relationship or parental status?
- d) How is subjective wellbeing affected by the partnership status of the ex-partner?

Hypothesis:

- a) It is expected that lone mothers will report lower levels of subjective wellbeing than married parents, and worse than lone fathers. It is expected that income and education will account for some initial gap in reported wellbeing between lone mothers, lone fathers and married parents, however statistically significant associations will persist.
- b) Co-parenting signifies a more equal division of parental labour and a lesser disruption to routines following divorce and will be associated with higher levels of wellbeing than those without a co-parental relationship.
- c) Whilst we expect lone mothers to report lower levels of wellbeing than lone fathers, we expect relationship status to be a bigger contributory factor to the lower levels of wellbeing reported by lone parents than parental status.
- d) We expect those whose partner has re-partnered to report lower levels of wellbeing than those where both partners remain single following divorce

3.2 How do factors relating to the early life conditions and also the transition to adulthood affect the later life course incidence and duration of lone parenthood following divorce?

- a. How does education influence the likelihood to remain single for longer periods and to have greater relationship instability following divorce in Belgium?
- b. Does the experience of parental relationship instability during childhood lead to longer periods of lone parenthood and increased relationship instability following divorce?

- c. Does earlier union formation, age of leaving the parental home and earlier first birth lead to longer periods of lone parenthood following divorce and a greater incidence of relationship instability?
- d. How has the influence of the factors mentioned above changed across birth cohorts?

Hypothesis:

- a. It is expected that those with lower levels of education will be more likely to remain single for longer and experience greater relationship instability following divorce.
- b. It is expected that those who experience parental relationship instability during childhood will be more likely to experience longer periods of lone parenthood and greater relationship instability following divorce.
- c. It is expected that those who experience earlier union formation, ages of leaving the parental home and first births will also experience longer periods of lone parenthood and relationship instability following divorce.

4. Methods and data

4.1 Divorce in Flanders

The primary dataset is “Divorce in Flanders survey” (Mortelmans et al, 2012), collected in 2009/10 and available since 2013. It includes a comprehensive wellbeing survey, which can be used to create measures of subjective wellbeing. In addition it includes retrospective partnership histories, both before and after marriage. These include the dates, duration and types of relationships, as well as the age of leaving the parental home and the transition to adulthood. This makes the dataset suitable for allowing event history and also sequence analysis of relationship histories. The survey includes those remain married and also several different post-divorce relationship and parenting statuses. This allows for an analysis of the relationships between different family types and subjective wellbeing. The dataset therefore is highly suited to the research questions raised here concerning subjective wellbeing and also how early life conditions and the transition to adult affect the incidence and duration of spells of lone parenthood following divorce.

The survey is an intergenerational dataset drawn from the Belgian national register with a multi-actor multi-method design. Interviews for parents and children were conducted with a computer assisted personal interview (CAPI). Response rates for partners is 42.2%, and is similar to other European multi-actor surveys (Dykstra, et al., 2005). The data is cross-sectional, but with retrospective partnership information collected.

The study encompasses up to three generations of the same family, starting from a selected reference marriage, which is either intact (n=1,811) or divorced (n=4,659), and also, if available, one child (n=1,577) and one grandparent (n=2,157). The sample therefore is disproportionately stratified with

regards to marriage, 1/3 still married 2/3 divorced, but proportionately with regards to year of marriage.

The sample contains couples married between January 1st, 1971 and December 31st, 2008. The couples all reside in the Flemish region and have Belgian nationality, though their parents may not have done. They are also all either still in their first marriage or have since experienced one divorce. This means that the experiences of widows, lone mothers from child birth outside of marriage, cohabiting unions and also as 1st generation migrants are not represented here.

The timeframe, between 1971 and 2008 represents a broad historical period of coverage also encompassing the rise and peak of divorce rates, increases in female education & labour force participation and changes in attitudes to marriage, divorce and lone parenting.

The age range is from 22-72 with a mean of 46 years of age at the time the sample was taken. In addition the time of divorce ranges from 1974 up until 2009, covering a period of massive change in attitudes and permissiveness towards divorce.

4.2 Research method 1: lone parenthood and subjective wellbeing and gender

The Divorce in Flanders survey includes a number of item questions which can be used to create composite variables of subjective wellbeing in several areas and therefore allowing a comparison between different areas of subjective wellbeing including hedonic (happiness), Cognitive (evaluative/satisfaction) and eudemonic (flourishing) across different relationship, gender and parenting combinations.

4.2.1 Measures of wellbeing

The dependent variables will be a combination of single and composite measures of subjective wellbeing. The motivation for using composite measures of wellbeing is that, theoretically, using multiple questions which assess the same or similar meaning is more capable of averaging out any error or mistakes in responses (Krueger & Schkade, 2008; New Economics Foundation, 2008). This ensures that the measure is much more likely to capture an individual's true value.

Methodologically what this requires, however, is to ensure that these questions are a) assessing the same or similar phenomenon and b) can be aggregated in a theoretically coherent way. The latter part of this presents two problems which need to be addressed. The first of these is ensuring that items with different scales can be aggregated, giving equal weight to each measure. The second part of this is ensuring that the meaning of identical responses, such as a response of four to two different, but similar questions, is the same.

A solution to this where measures are not of equal size is to centre individuals responses to these questions by computing individual Z scores which represent an individual's deviation from the sample mean (Thomson & Marks, 2008; Michaelson, et al., 2009; Clark & Senik, 2011). Hypothetically this makes it much more suitable to aggregate, as regardless of the item scale, an individual's responses are represented as centred deviations from the average across the sample. This is computed as below

$$Z - score = \frac{x - \bar{x}}{\sigma}$$

Following this it is important to ensure that items which will be amalgamated together are measuring the same thing. In order to do this, a hierarchical cluster analysis or factor analysis will be carried out. This will ensure items are a) assessing similar meanings and that b) particular individuals are responding in similar ways across items. An assessment of the robustness of this method using z scores and also regression analysis of the final composite variables has been carried out by Clark & Senik (2011) using both OLS and Probit regression models in comparison to continuous single item measures.

This has already been computed for three different measures Life Satisfaction (Cognitive), Emotional Wellbeing (Hedonic) and Vitality (Eudemonic). The item level questions used can be seen below in table 2. All items were computed to be in the same direction with negative items being reversed.

Table 2. Subjective wellbeing: item questions

Question	Scale	Meaning
Emotional Wellbeing		
How often have you felt...during the last week?		
Happy	1-4	1=Rarely 4=All of the time
Enjoyed Life	1-4	1=Rarely 4=All of the time
Sad	1-4	1=Rarely 4=All of the time
Depressed	1-4	1=Rarely 4=All of the time
Life Satisfaction		
On the whole, how satisfied are you with your life?	0-10	0=Extremely Unsatisfied 10=Extremely Satisfied
Vitality		
How often have you felt...during the last week?		
Everything was an effort	1-4	1=Rarely 4=All of the time
My Sleep was restless	1-4	1=Rarely 4=All of the time
I could not get going	1-4	1=Rarely 4=All of the time
How would you rate your health?	1-5	1=Very Bad 5=Excellent
I see myself as someone who is full of energy	1-5	1=Agree Strongly 5=Disagree Strongly

4.2.2 Family status: gender, parenting and relationship status

Expected Result 7.2

PhD Research Design: ESR7 Sam Jenkinson

These items will be modelled using regression analysis against different post-divorce family statuses, taking into account an individual's relationship, child custody and gender status. It is proposed that these family trajectories will be represented by categorical dummy variables, as seen in table 3 which shows descriptive statistics for these dummy variables. This will allow coefficients to vary by family type and to show the impact of specific interactions.

Parents are identified from a household grid contained in the divorce in Flanders survey. This contains information on household members and an identifier of the presence of either a biological or adoptive child. Those with at least one biological or adoptive child present in the house are identified as a yes. It is possible to identify the amount of time a child resides in the house using a co-parenting grid (Basaits & Mortelmans, 2017). It is proposed to also test whether the residential arrangement is either a) majority with parent x, 50/50 or a minority of time to test the strength of an association.

Expected Result 7.2

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Table 3 Descriptive Statistics:

Marital Status & Gender (Raw Life Satisfaction)	N	mean	sd	se
Divorced & Cohabiting Male	642	8,24	1,50	0,06
Divorced & Cohabiting Female	629	8,17	1,51	0,06
Divorced & Remarried Male	682	8,46	1,31	0,05
Divorced & Remarried Female	711	8,37	1,55	0,06
Divorced and Single Male	563	6,72	2,17	0,09
Divorced and single Female	777	7,08	1,95	0,07
Divorced & non-cohab relationship male	221	7,79	1,48	0,10
Divorced non-cohab relationship female	272	7,79	1,65	0,10
Still Married Male	813	8,09	1,30	0,05
Still Married Female	950	8,06	1,42	0,05
invalid info	105	7,33	1,99	0,19
Education (Raw Life Satisfaction)				
ISCED 0-2	1368	7,82	2,03	0,05
ISCED 3-4	2604	7,93	1,70	0,03
ISCED 5-8	2379	7,91	1,45	0,03
<NA>	14	8,29	1,33	0,35
Labour Supply (Raw Life Satisfaction)				
Inactive	1234	7,59	2,14	0,06
Part-time	1326	7,99	1,54	0,04
Full-time	3805	7,96	1,56	0,03
Parental Nationality (Raw Life Satisfaction)				
Both Parents Belgian	6186	7,90	1,69	0,02
1 non-Belgian	161	7,92	1,79	0,14
Both parents none Belgian	8	6,63	1,69	0,60
missing	10	8,30	1,49	0,47
Resident Children (Raw Life Satisfaction)				
Yes	3735	7,92	1,57	0,03
NO	2630	7,86	1,85	0,04
Age (years)				
	N	Mean	Min	Max
	6365	46,4	22,00	72,00

4.2.3 Regression analysis and control Variables

The regression analysis would be done both before and after controlling for typical correlates of subjective wellbeing; including income; education; family migration background; occupation; time since divorce and labour market participation level. Any changes in magnitude and significance will therefore be indicative of key explanatory factors, for instance income, a well-known factor in lower levels of reported wellbeing of lone mothers.

It is proposed to use both OLS regression, allowing both the single and centre multi-item models to behave continuously, but also to transform them into a binomial dependent variable at the level of the mean for the centred variables. This will allow an investigation of two important elements. On the one hand we can see the magnitude in difference between levels of subjective wellbeing and different family types, but also the likelihood to be above or below average in relation to family types. This will be done initially using only the family status dummies before moving on to include control variables.

The benefit of this approach is the ability to disentangle the effects on subjective wellbeing of being single and also a parent by include people in each relationship status with and without children. It will also allow these affects to vary by gender, as can be seen by the table of family statuses above in relation to life satisfaction. This will therefore provide an answer to how being single following divorce, but with and without children is related to measures of subjective wellbeing, including life satisfaction, emotional wellbeing, autonomy, self-esteem, depression and anxiety and social wellbeing.

In this sense, the differences in “involved fatherhood” and “intensive mothering” in relation to the wellbeing of lone mothers will be examined and any association left after controlling for relevant socio-economic characteristics will be suggestive of how much these two sociological phenomena effect men and women differently with regards to lone parenting.

4.3 Research method 2: lone parenthood, early life conditions and the transition to adulthood

4.3.1 Sequence analysis

Sequence analysis became prominent in the social sciences in the 1990s and enables the creation of typologies of life courses by looking at the timing, sequencing and quantum of different sequences of events and states (Billari, Fürnkranz & Prskawetz, 2006). The aim here is to see how the incidence and timing of particular events affect the incidence and duration of lone parenthood following divorce. This works by using a technique called *Optimal Matching Analysis*. It creates a matrix of dissimilarities between pairs of trajectories or stages (Aassve, Billari & Piccarreta, 2007, Strueder & Ritschard 2015). Following this the dissimilarities are clustered into similar trajectories in order to identify distinct trajectories. Methodologically this is done by measuring distance, or at least, how many sequence

transformations need to be changed to go from one sequence to another. This is done by a cost association for each transformation or sequence edit with greater costs meaning greater distance. One problem here is the arbitrary nature of identifying costs. Here further work is needed and consultation will be done with other parties of the project, most notably the University of Geneva to identify the most appropriate methods to do this. Potential ones are as follows Longest Common Prefix (LCP), which looks for the longest common chain of identical states, Optimal Matching (based on Levenshtein), and hamming distance based on attributed costs (Strueder & Richard 2015).

The benefit of this technique is that it takes a data mining approach and seeks to look for the behavioral patterns to be explained within the data with fewer a priori expectations, it is a data based approach rather than a hypothesis based approach (Billari, Fürnkranz & Prskawetz, 2006). Patterns are found through clustering and these typologies can then be examined themselves through regression analysis.

The trajectories were identified by calculating the sequences based on the following variables; the date of separation from marital partner and then the beginning and ending of relationships involving moving in with a partner for up to three post-divorce relationships. It was chosen to use separation because often the date of legal divorce can be sometime after the marriage has de facto ended and leads to a greater likelihood of relationship overlaps. In addition it was not clear if all the information involving non-cohabiting unions could be relied upon, particularly for those which were a long time ago. A preliminary analysis has highlighted three main trajectories of interest; those whose relationships are more stable following divorce, those who are particularly unstable with multiple partners over short periods and those who remain single for long periods.

Individuals falling into these three trajectories will be identified by creating dummy variables. These will then be used in logistic regression analysis with the variables of interest highlighted in the theoretical background including; incidence and age of parental divorce; parental and own educational level measured in ISCED score 1-3; age of first union and age of first birth.

This will enable us to test how much the different relationship trajectories, both stable and unstable, are actually correlating in Belgium with the patterns found in the diverging destinies hypothesis in the United States.

5. Methodological constraints

One problem with the approach outlined here is the cross sectional nature of the wellbeing data. This information was collected at the time of the survey only. This means there are difficulties in drawing causal connections between family structure and wellbeing including, and most importantly, whether people who are more likely to have lower subjective wellbeing are also more likely to select into particular family structures. In addition this also raises complications concerning the ability to clearly see, for

instance, how long someone takes to recover or adapt to a particular family structure. One solution to this which will be explored is to use the **European Social Survey** to allow longitudinal and cross national analysis as an alternative source. This contains all of the relevant wellbeing data and has been used for similar purposes already.

The majority of the subjective wellbeing measures used here have low missing item rates with the highest missing values being only 19 missing observations. The only exception to this is vitality where on question concerning how an individual views themselves as a “*person full of energy*” which has 127 missing values. Whilst this is somewhat higher it is still relatively low and the survey on the whole has response rates similar to other multi actor studies (Dykstra, et al., 2005).

Another limitation is the geographic spread of the sample as the sample is limited to Flanders. It does not therefore represent the whole of Belgium and misses potential variation between larger cities, such as Brussels but also distinctly different regions such as Wallonia.

The sample is also limited to Belgian nationals. This means it does not include first generation migrants meaning any findings apply strictly to those of Belgian nationality. One exception this is those of second generation migrant background, which we control for.

The measures proposed to capture the presence of children in the household are also relatively crude. It captures the presence of a resident child, adopted or biological, under the age of 16 and does not take account fully of the composition, age or amount of time spent in each parents’ custody. It is proposed to use the household calendar grid which records each day over a two week period which a child is resident in the household of each ex-partner to better capture the complete amount of time the child is present in the household.

The sample is not representative of Belgium, with an oversampling of divorcees. To fix this sample weights will be used as included in the Divorce in Flanders dataset¹.

The retrospective partnership histories are also not without some limitations. It is arguably that those whose divorces are quite some time in the past may be less likely to remember exact dates or even all relationships which occurred. There is likely to be somewhat of a recall bias which means that those who had their divorce more recently in the data set are more likely to better recall their partnership histories. In addition, those who divorced more recently are not going to have the time for three post-divorce relationships and so some reflection on this is still required. In the first instance it has been decided to use separation dates and only actual relationships which involve a marriage or cohabitation, as these are arguably much more likely to be recalled than just a relationship.

¹ There are a number of different sample weights contained within the divorce in Flanders dataset for use which need further investigation.

Preliminary Timeline and Sections

The PhD will be organized into the following series of chapters:

Chapter 1. Introduction and research Context

This section will describe the research context and its relevance in both an academic and policy perspective.

Chapter 2. Theoretical framework

Chapter 3. Data

This section will describe broadly the Divorce in Flanders survey.

Chapter 4. Methodology

This chapter will describe the general methodology including the use of sequence analysis, regression and composite measures of subjective wellbeing.

Chapter 5. Subjective wellbeing and lone parenthood following divorce: how do the consequences of lone parenthood differ for men and women in light of gender specific parenting norms?

Using multiple dimensions of subjective wellbeing to investigate how the consequences of lone parenthood differ in relation to gender specific parenting norms. Theoretical considerations on how gender specific parenting norms affect men and women differently will be presented along with regression analysis of composite variables of subjective wellbeing for men and women, controlling for relevant socio-economic characteristics.

Chapter 6. Co-Parenting & the subjective wellbeing of lone mothers and fathers?

How does a more equal division of parental labour following divorce affect the different dimensions of subjective wellbeing of lone mothers and fathers?

Using the three dimensions of subjective wellbeing, hedonic, eudemonic and cognitive measures, this chapter will evaluate how different custody arrangements affect the reported levels of wellbeing associated with lone parenthood.

Chapter 7. How does education and the transition to adulthood influence the incidence and duration of lone parenthood following divorce of men and women in Flanders?

Using retrospective partnership history sequence analysis will be carried out on the partnership trajectories of mothers and fathers. Typologies obtained from this method, including those most likely to re-partner fastest, those most likely to remain single for the longest and those with the most unstable post-divorce relationship trajectories will be used in logistic regression analysis. Independent factors including educational level, in light of the diverging destinies hypothesis, and also age of leaving the parental home, age of first birth and incidence of pre-marital cohabitation will be used to assess how different transitions to adult may affect the incidence and duration of periods of lone parenthood following divorce.

Chapter 8. Early life conditions and lone parenthood following divorce. How do the different early life conditions of mothers and fathers affect the incidence and duration of lone parenthood following divorce?

How do differences in early life conditions, including the incidence and age of parental relationship instability and parental educational level affect the relationship trajectories of men and women.

Chapter 9. Re-partnership and wellbeing. How does the re-partnering of an ex-spouse affect the other partners subjective wellbeing?

An individual's response to a subjective wellbeing survey item is typically considered to have two important elements; a comparison of their life to what they are used to and also a comparison to others they know. In this case we assess how levels of subjective wellbeing are affected by the partnership status of ones ex-partner.

Timeline Schedule 2016-2020

The following events and training workshops have been undertaken as part of the PhD So far

Table 4.0 Work Completed and Planned Future Work

Month	Event
10.16	Training: Fundamental Statistical Research Methods in R
11.16	Training: Advanced Regression and Analysis of Variance in R
11.16	Training: Scientific Integrity. PhD School KU leuven
11.16	Training : LongPoP Training Netowrk. Intermediate Data Structure (IDS) Training Amsterdam
01.17	Training: LongPOP Training Network concerning inrodution to GIS Madrid
02.17	Training KU LSTAT: Advanced Programing in R
08.17	Training Geneva: Long pop training Network. Sequence analysis with TraMineR
09.17	Training: Longpop Training Newwork. Using historical data in GIS
09.17	Submission of Deliverable 7.1 LongPOP Project
09.17	Submission of Deliverable 7.2 Longpop Project
09.17	Conference Presentation: Divorce Conference Antwerp
10.17	Submission of PhD Proposal KU Leuven PhD School
11.17	1st Meeting of Supervisory Committee Meeting.
12.17	Completion of 1st paper " <i>Multi-Dimensional Subjective Wellbeing (SWB), Lone Parenthood and Divorce. How do different post-divorce family dynamics influence different measures of SWB?</i> "
01.18	Mid Term Project Review Longpop
01.18	Training Leuven: Agent Based Modelling
01.18	Training: Leuven: Spatial Regression models
03.18	Secondment 1 Longpop
05.18	Completion of second Paper. "The determinants of post-divorce relationship trajectories. What is the role of early life conditions, intergenerational transmission, education and the transition to adulthood in influencing post-divorce partnership trajectories?"
06.18	European Population Conference 2018. Abstract proposal submitted "The determinants of post-divorce relationship trajectories. What is the role of early life conditions, intergenerational transmission, education & the transition to adulthood in influencing post-divorce partnership trajectories?"
08.18	1st Doctoral Seminar
09.18	Secondment 2 Longpop
2019	Writing up PhD
09.20	Completion of PhD

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