

Residential choice following separation and widowhood in middle and later life in Belgium and Sweden

Zuzana Zilincikova¹  | Isabel Palomares Linares^{1,2} | Alyona Artamonova^{1,3} | Maria Brandén^{4,5}  | Christine Schnor⁶

¹Population Research Centre, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands

²Department of Sociology, University of Granada, Granada, Spain

³Population Research Institute, Västöliitto, Helsinki, Finland

⁴Demography Unit, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

⁵Institute for Analytical Sociology, Linköping University, Norrköping, Sweden

⁶Centre for Demographic Research, Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Correspondence

Zuzana Zilincikova, Population Research Centre, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands.
Email: z.zilincikova@rug.nl

Funding information

European Research Council, Grant/Award Number: 740113; Swedish Research Council, Grant/Award Number: 2019-00245; Strategic Research Council at the Academy of Finland, Grant/Award Number: 345183; Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare, Grant/Award Number: 2016-07115; Fond de la Recherche Scientifique de Belgique; Walloon Region

Abstract

It is well-documented that residential moves are connected to life events such as separation or widowhood. However, much less is known about the residential choices that follow these events in middle and later life (between ages 50 and 70) and how the location of family members outside the household relates to these choices. Comparing the cases of Belgium and Sweden, this paper addresses (i) the extent to which (im)mobility after separation or widowhood is associated with the presence of older parents and adult children nearby; (ii) the extent to which the choice of destination is associated with the location of older parents and adult children for those separated, widowed, and married individuals who moved, and (iii) how these patterns vary among men and women. We answer these questions employing logistic regression models and discrete-choice models fitted to Belgian and Swedish register data from 2012 to 2014. The results show unique patterns of mobility around separation and widowhood which differ from those of continuously married individuals. Separated and widowed men and women in both countries are generally more likely to make a move towards their parents than continuously married ones. Widowhood is also associated with an increased propensity for a move towards one's children. In contrast, separation is associated with a lower propensity for moving towards one's children, especially among men.

KEYWORDS

discrete-choice models, family ties, grey divorce, internal migration, separation, widowhood

1 | INTRODUCTION

The importance of intergenerational ties in western societies has been recently underlined by two population trends—an increase in life expectancy, which means more years of shared life between two generations, and an increase in the instability of intragenerational ties,

manifested by high separation and divorce rates in most western European countries. Key to frequent face-to-face contact and support between kin is geographical proximity between family members (Hank, 2007; Joseph & Hallman, 1998; Knijn & Liefbroer, 2006; Litwak & Kulis, 1987), and, not surprisingly, geography of family members plays an important role in individual residential choices.

This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2023 The Authors. *Population, Space and Place* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

From a family ties perspective (Coulter et al., 2016; Mulder, 2018), the location of non-resident family acts as a beacon, motivation for the move, and/or anchor, tying family members to specific places. Indeed, having family members living close by is an important local tie that decreases the likelihood of migration (Mulder & Malmberg, 2014; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020); and, conversely, distant family members form an attraction factor for migration (Pettersson & Malmberg, 2009; Smits, 2010; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020).

It has been well documented that life events such as divorce, separation, or widowhood, that is, events which tend to trigger support needs, are connected to increased residential mobility (Evandrou et al., 2010). Bonding capital between family members, and particularly between parents and children, play a major role in such life-stress situations, enabling support at the material, instrumental, and emotional levels (Campbell et al., 1986; Litwak & Szelenyi, 1969). The literature accordingly shows that people experiencing partnership transitions consider the location of family members in the relocation decision that may occur after, for example, widowhood (Bonnet et al., 2010) or divorce (Smits, 2010; Spring et al., 2021; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020). Yet, the extent to which the location of the family plays a role in the mobility decision is likely to differ following separation and widowhood, but also for men and women, as a result of gendered family interactions.

Given the importance of intergenerational ties in the context of an ageing population, many researchers have prioritised the analysis of the relocation decisions of adult children and old-old (75–84) or oldest-old (85 and beyond) parents (Hjälms, 2012; Pettersson & Malmberg, 2009; Silverstein & Angelelli, 1998). Much less is known about the residential choices that follow partnership transitions of middle-aged (36–64) and young-old-aged (65–74) individuals and how the location of family members outside the household relates to these choices. This knowledge is, however, crucial for improving our understanding of (gendered) family relationships between adult children, middle-aged to young-old-aged adults, and their old-old-aged parents.

To address this gap, we focus on individuals aged 50–70. While in past decades, it was quite rare to divorce in older ages, we are now witnessing a steep increase in the number of individuals above 50 experiencing partnership breakups (also called the grey divorce revolution) (Brown & Lin, 2012). In addition, with the extension of life expectancy, widowhood has become less common among 50-to-70-year-old individuals. People in this age group are often labelled 'the sandwich generation', in between parents who are alive and (partly) dependent children who may live in or outside the parental household (Riley & Bowen, 2005). The residential choices of this generation might be connected to adult children as well as to the location of parents. As no specific term has been coined to refer to this age group, which stretches through middle age (usually 36–64) and young-old age (65–74) (APA, 2020), in this paper, we will use the term 'older individuals' to refer to the 50–70 age group.

In this paper, drawing on the cases of Belgium and Sweden, we explore (i) to what extent (im)mobility after separation and

widowhood is associated with the presence of older parents and adult children nearby; (ii) to what extent the choice of destination in inter-municipal moves is associated with the location of older parents and adult children for those separated, widowed and married individuals who moved; and (iii) how these patterns vary among men and women. We answer these questions employing logistic regression models and discrete-choice models fitted to Belgian and Swedish register data from 2012 to 2014.

We contribute to the existing literature in several ways. First, we add to the scarce literature on migration related to separation or widowhood in mid and later life. Unlike most previous studies, we discuss different mechanisms that could motivate a move following two different events: separation and widowhood. Second, we apply a methodological approach that in migration studies remains under-utilized, that of discrete-choice modelling (but see, e.g., Berck et al., 2016; Zorlu & Latten, 2009). This allows us to better understand what characteristics of a place, in terms of different family ties (location of parents and all children), encourage or discourage the choice of location for such a move. Importantly, this modelling enables us to account for the geography of the family network and extend the analysis beyond the parent–child dyad. Third, we explore whether mobility patterns differ for men and women to further understand if and to what extent partnership transition events have gendered consequences for the family members. Finally, by applying the same research design in two countries that represent different cultural and institutional contexts (e.g., in terms of the strength of family ties and reliance on the family for support), we can also speculate on the generalisability of the findings and the potential influence of these contexts on the latter.

2 | BACKGROUND

2.1 | Mobility of older individuals: A life course approach

There is a well-observed pattern of changing migration propensity across the life course. While people are most mobile in their young adulthood, mobility generally decreases with age and then moderately increases again among the oldest old (Bell & Muhidin, 2009). Several studies of later-life migration find that among individuals older than 50, the youngest age group and oldest age groups are the most mobile (Angelini & LaFerrere, 2012; Evandrou et al., 2010). Even though the propensity for internal migration of older age groups has increased in recent years (Andersson & Abramsson, 2012), this period in the life course is mostly characterised by residential stability. Migrating usually comes at the cost of loss of 'location-specific capital' accumulated in the place of residence (David et al., 2010; Mulder & Malmberg, 2014; Puga, 2004). For older individuals, losing such local ties and other 'insider advantages' could be more costly than for younger people (Fischer & Malmberg, 2001). Consequently, older adults move less and tend to stay at their place of residence for longer periods (Fernández-Carro & Evandrou, 2014).

To understand immobility and migration patterns in older age, economics-focused and human-capital theories (which are the most influential perspectives used to explain long-distance migration during youth and adulthood) have been proven insufficient (Sommers & Rowell, 1992; Wiseman, 1980). This is because for older individuals, the decision to move is less dependent on work and career factors and more linked to other areas of life. A life course perspective provides a more accurate framework for approaching the study of later-life migration decisions (Clark, 2013). The literature shows that these migration decisions are strongly connected to life changes such as retirement (Duncombe et al., 2003), the emptying of the nest (Bures, 2009), an increasing need for assistance (Artamonova et al., 2020; Nowok et al., 2013), or disruptive events such as divorce and widowhood (Evandrou et al., 2010). In fact, among older individuals, partnership status change is one of the strongest predictors of a move (Evandrou et al., 2010), and the widowed and separated are the most mobile group among older individuals (Bonnet et al., 2010; Pope & Kang, 2010). More recently, the mobility of older individuals has been also connected to repartnering (Evandrou et al., 2010).

According to Walters (2002), one of the objectives of applying a life-course perspective to mobility patterns is to evaluate the characteristics of place most often associated with the mobility of a particular migrant group. Location choices made by older individuals (especially the young-old age group) relate to several factors. On the one hand, the first factor is related to environmental amenities (Hansen & Gottschalk, 2006; Liaw et al., 2002; Nedomysl & Hansen, 2010). Locations with desirable climates, less congestion and crime, and a lower cost of housing and living can become destinations for later-life migration (Abramsson & Andersson, 2016; Conway & Houtenville, 2003; Duncombe et al., 2003). On the other hand, social ties, and especially family ties, have been highlighted as a key factor in understanding individuals' residential choices (Coulter et al., 2016; Gillespie & Mulder, 2020; Lundholm, 2015; Mulder, 2018). The role of family ties in the residential choices of older individuals experiencing widowhood or separation/divorce is central to our research.

2.2 | Family ties and migration in later life

Family represents one of the strongest forms of bonding capital in people's lives and is often a resource for material, emotional and instrumental support (Knijn & Liefbroer, 2006; Litwak & Szelenyi, 1969). Thus, from a family ties perspective on migration across the life course (Coulter et al., 2016; Elder, 1994; Mulder, 2018), the location of one's family is likely to play an important role in residential choices, and a likely crucial factor for mobility decisions in later life. As has been shown, having family members living close by decreases the likelihood of migration (Fischer & Malmberg, 2001; Mulder & Malmberg, 2014; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020), whereas having distant family members increase the propensity to migrate

(Pettersson & Malmberg, 2009; Smits, 2010; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020; Van Diepen & Mulder, 2009).

The literature on migration in later life often focuses on the migration of parents towards their child(ren) or the migration of children towards a parent. This literature usually stresses that moves towards kin are driven by the need for the assistance of a parent or a child. Moreover, Smits (2010), Thomas and Dommermuth (2020) and Artamonova et al. (2020) showed that those who need assistance tend to move towards those who might give this assistance and not the other way around.

Even though mobility decisions might not be triggered by the care needs of parents and children, they might influence the direction of the move. Today, older adults, especially in the age group 50–70, are often providers of care both to their parents and their children and are thus called the 'sandwich generation' (Grundy & Henretta, 2006; Lundholm & Malmberg, 2009). Older parents are an important source of intergenerational support, for example, for grandchild care (Hank & Buber, 2009; Knijn & Liefbroer, 2006), but they can also be a source of care for their ageing parents. Need for grandchild care or deteriorating health of parents might be especially influential on the direction of the move.

Additionally, family is not only a resource in case of need but also a source of well-being (Litwak & Szelenyi, 1969). The family network has been proven to act as an umbrella for kin passing through life events associated with emotional vulnerability such as divorce, widowhood or even an unstable period in their work or career. Moreover, Araos and Siles (2021) and Glaser and Tomassini (2000) show that living or moving close to the family is a residential choice strongly shaped by cultural beliefs and expectations about family life. In this sense, family closeness is activated by the need for social affiliation and could be considered a strategy based on preferences rather than on objective or instrumental needs. In this regard, while Van Diepen and Mulder (2009) as well as Hansen and Gottschalk (2006) suggest that for young adults, family closeness is not the most prominent reason to move, Gillespie and Mulder (2020) and Nedomysl (2008) show that the relevance of family as a reason to move increases with age. Older individuals tend to prioritise proximity to family members as a motive for their residential choices.

When discussing for whom family ties are more relevant, gender differences should be highlighted. Due to their traditional role of main provider of support within the family, women, especially in older generations, seem to value proximity to kin to a greater extent than men when evaluating a possible move (Fischer & Malmberg, 2001; Nedomysl, 2008). Women are more likely to mention non-resident family members as a motive for migration (Gillespie & Mulder, 2020) and family attachment as a reason to stay (Clark et al., 2017; Fernández-Carro & Evandrou, 2014). Nevertheless, the influence of family ties in the residential choices of women has been shown to vary among different contexts. For example, Bordone (2009) and Glaser and Tomassini (2000) show that the location of a non-resident child is a determinant of the residential choices of women in Italy but not in Sweden or the United Kingdom.

2.3 | Widowhood, separation and divorce and moves towards family members

Separation or widowhood may function as a trigger for moves towards other family members. The literature on mobility after separation/divorce or widowhood tends to pursue the same argument—that individuals experiencing such partnership transitions are likely to have increased support needs (either emotional or instrumental) and, if they live far away from their family members, may consider moving to be closer to them (e.g., Smits, 2010; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020). What is missing in the literature is the focus on the important differences between the cases of widowhood and separation/divorce as triggers for geographic mobility.

First, widowhood is less likely to result in an immediate need to move as the surviving partner can continue living in the marital home. Nevertheless, a widow or widower might consider moving, for example, for emotional or instrumental support or to reduce housing costs (Bonnet et al., 2010). Separation, on the other hand, usually means that at least one partner immediately needs to move. It is also quite common for both partners move from their joint home. In the context of Belgium, Zilincikova and Schnor (2021) found that in about a third of cases of separation in the 50–70 age group, both partners moved within three years after separation. The move of both ex-partners might be motivated, for example, by the sale of the joint home and property settlement or by reasons similar to those in the case of widowhood.

Second, widowhood may leave ties with other family members intact or even strengthen them. Ha and Carr (2005) showed that in the immediate period after bereavement, the dependence of parents on children increases and the intergenerational relationship becomes less ambivalent and more positive (Ha & Ingersoll-Dayton, 2008). There is evidence that women tend to receive more help from their children than men following widowhood (Kalmijn, 2007). Separation, as compared to widowhood, is more likely to be accompanied by conflict, which can influence wider family ties, especially those with children. As intergenerational ties are usually found to be stronger between a mother and a child than between a father and a child (Fingerman et al., 2020), it is no surprise that the ties between fathers and children are more negatively affected by separation than those between mothers and children (Kalmijn, 2007; Thuen & Eikeland, 1998; Wright & Maxwell, 1991).

Third, separation is more often associated with repartnering than widowhood (Schimmele & Wu, 2016). Repartnering contributes to the wider deterioration of parent–child ties, especially for men (De Graaf & Fokkema, 2006; Kalmijn, 2007) and may drive a move away from family or in a direction other than towards one's family. The propensity to repartner can be related to ties to family and friends. There is some evidence that family living nearby can reduce the probability of repartnering among older individuals (Brown et al., 2019).

Separation and widowhood are associated with a lower likelihood of moving if a child lives nearby (widowhood: Hjälms, 2012; separation: Spring et al., 2021). It thus seems that in both cases,

having family members living close by deters migration. In terms of mobility decisions, Smits (2010) found in the Dutch context that being ever divorced or widowed is associated with a higher propensity of moving very close or close to a child but also, and to a larger extent, of moving elsewhere compared to intact parental couples. Thomas and Dommermuth (2020) in the Norwegian context found that separation and to a lower extent widowhood of older parents are associated with a move closer to children compared to intact parental couples. At the same time, those who experienced separation or widowhood are also more likely to move elsewhere. In particular, fathers who experienced divorce are more likely to move elsewhere than near a child. Finally, Roan and Raley (1996) found in the context of the United States that becoming widowed was associated with an increased likelihood of a mother moving into coresidence with a child, while no similar association was found for transition to separation.

Moves towards parents have been predominantly studied in the context of separation or divorce and among younger individuals. Parents living nearby seem to deter the children's migration in case of children's separation (Mulder & Wagner, 2012). Additionally, separation has been positively associated with moving into coresidence with parents (Albertini et al., 2018; Smits et al., 2010; Stone et al., 2014) or close to the parents (Das et al., 2017; Smits, 2010). There is some evidence that widowed children as compared to those with a partner are more likely to move closer to their parents (Smits, 2010). Due to the low number of cases of widowhood among younger adults, a few studies distinguished between the effects of widowhood and separation on moves towards parents and found only non-significant effects (Smits et al., 2010).

2.4 | Moving across municipalities and towards family members

In the previous section, we have demonstrated that family ties, either to children or parents, are an important factor in the decision to move following separation or widowhood. The question remains, towards which family members is the move usually directed? In the case of separation, an individual's ties to adult children are more likely to be negatively affected than their ties to ageing parents (Dykstra, 1997). We can therefore assume that in the case of separation where the individual has a living parent, migration towards parents might particularly increase in importance. The existing literature, which typically only focuses on two generations, does not provide any empirical evidence on mobility preferences in terms of the choice of moving closer to children or parents.

On the other hand, there is some evidence pointing to which children are more 'attractive', although not specifically in the context of widowhood or separation. Moves towards one's children are more likely if there are also grandchildren (Smits, 2010; Winke, 2017), if the child is female and if the child is the only child (Smits, 2010). The selection of a child as their caregiver among older parents has been also found to be connected to previous geographical distance

between a parent and a child and to some extent to gender—mothers were more likely to move into care arrangements with their daughters (Leopold et al., 2014).

For some, the decision to move is strongly connected to the choice of destination. In particular, those who are migrating to live close to a family member may not consider other destinations (Wiseman, 1980). The same may apply if recently separated or widowed individuals relocate towards new partners. However, for others who decide to move, a search process begins (Wiseman, 1980). As described in Section 2.1, older individuals are more likely to move to locations that provide attractive environments and affordable housing (Conway & Houtenville, 2003; Liaw et al., 2002). However, it remains unclear which locational traits attract individuals following divorce or widowhood in the 50–70 age group and whether these traits are different than in the case of married couples.

2.5 | The contexts of Sweden and Belgium

Sweden is among the European countries with the highest internal migration rates among different age groups. Belgium's internal migration rates are on the European average, lower than Sweden's and other Scandinavian countries' levels, although still far from the very low rates of southern Europe (Champion et al., 2018; Stillwell et al., 2016). However, focusing on older individuals' patterns, Fernández-Carro and Evandrou (2014) pointed out that Belgian older people are among the least mobile in Europe. Older Belgians are more likely to have a trajectory of long-term immobility than their Swedish counterparts.

There are several factors behind these differences between Swedish and Belgian migration and immobility patterns. First, Belgium has a stronger homeownership culture than Sweden (73% of homeowners in Belgium, 60% in Sweden; Mulder & Billari, 2010), and housing tenure is strongly connected with the propensity to move (Andersson & Abramsson, 2012; Angelini et al., 2011). In this regard, the Swedish housing system and policy are more oriented towards facilitating the availability and affordability of rental choices than is the case in western, central and southern European countries, which have a stronger homeownership culture (Andersson & Abramsson, 2012; Angelini et al., 2013; Fernández-Carro & Evandrou, 2014).

Second, Belgium and Sweden have different geographic features and urbanisation processes. In Sweden, north–south regional disparities are more pronounced in terms of urban–rural population distribution and population density. Belgium is divided into Dutch-speaking Flanders, French-speaking Wallonia and Brussels. Internal migration tends to be highly constrained to flows within the two regions and to and from Brussels. For both countries, geography is also connected to the distance of moves. In Belgium, short-distance migration prevails, whereas longer-distance migration is more common in Sweden (Stillwell et al., 2016).

Differences in migration and immobility patterns are also at the origin of a more or less dispersed geographical distribution of the

family network. In Belgium, kin are more likely to live nearby than is the case in Sweden (Fernández-Carro & Evandrou, 2014). In both countries, at older ages, intergenerational coresidence is becoming less common, but it is still very common to live near at least one child or parent (Rainer & Siedler, 2012). Nevertheless, differences in family proximity have been also linked to differences in family culture. Sweden has been pointed out to have a weak culture of family ties (Fors & Lennartsson, 2008; Hank, 2007; Reher, 1998), partly due to Swedish society being relatively individualistic, where autonomy and intimacy values strongly guide residential choices of kin (Hank, 2007; Hjälml, 2012; Silverstein & Angelelli, 1998). Belgium is characterised by stronger family ties than Sweden, even though its culture of family ties is not as strong as in southern European countries.

These differences in culture of family ties are also linked to differences in terms of institutional support of the welfare state regarding family caregiving needs at the earlier and later stages of life. The Scandinavian welfare states have been shown to provide more formal support than those on the Continent, reducing the dependency on families as informal care sources (Rainer & Siedler, 2012). In terms of parental leave, Sweden offers longer paid leave to the parents (34.5 full rate equivalent weeks) compared to Belgium (13.2) (OECD, 2022). Maternal employment as well as enrolment in childcare is high in both countries (OECD, 2020, 2023), but in Belgium, the reliance on informal care is much higher. For example, in 2019 in Belgium, 32.1% of children received informal care (usually from other family members); in contrast, in Sweden, informal care was almost non-existent (0.2%) (Gromada & Richardson, 2021). Informal care for ageing individuals is also more common in Belgium, where 20% of individuals above 50 provide informal care, whereas in Sweden it is only 11% (Devos et al., 2019). The level of intervention of a welfare state has a strong impact on reducing the responsibilities of women as they are the main care providers within the family. In this regard, Swedish migration patterns of adult children and older parents, as well as patterns of family proximity and family caregiving, seem to be more gender neutral, suggesting that gender may be a more relevant factor for understanding migration towards family in Belgium than it may be in Sweden (Fernández-Carro & Evandrou, 2014; Rainer & Siedler, 2012; Vergauwen & Mortelmans, 2020).

3 | HYPOTHESES

From the literature review, it can be concluded that experiencing separation or widowhood increases one's probability of moving. Previous studies provide quite strong evidence that local family ties reduce mobility. It is, however, less clear what shapes the mobility choices of those who experience separation or widowhood and how these differ from each other as well as from the mobility choices of married couples. In addition, most previous studies are focused on relocation towards adult children or ageing parents and do not account for the complexity of family relations. The role of gender and social context in these choices also remains to be examined. We

formulate the following hypotheses, building on theory and previous findings.

The likelihood of moving to another municipality

H1. The likelihood of changing location is highest for those who experience separation, followed by those who experience widowhood, and lowest for continuously married.

H2. The presence of parent(s) and/or children in the municipality decreases the likelihood of moving especially for those who experienced separation or widowhood compared to continuously married.

Choice of location by family ties among movers

H3. Among movers with living parents, continuously married individuals are the least likely to move to the municipality where parents live whereas those who experience separation are the most likely to do so (no event < widowhood < separation). While both separation and widowhood increase the support needs, parents might be especially valuable source of support following separation, because of the potential disrupting effect of separation on descending family ties.

H4. Among movers who have children, continuously married individuals are the least likely to move to the municipality where a child lives whereas those who experience widowhood are the most likely to do so (no event < separation < widowhood). While both separation and widowhood increase the support needs, separation is more often connected with conflict which may also involve the children.

Gender

H5. The likelihood of moving to a municipality where family members (parent or child) live is higher for women than men.

H6. Men are less likely than women to move towards their children following separation, while the gender differences in the likelihood of migration towards children after widowhood are less pronounced.

Country differences

We examine whether similar mobility patterns are observed in two different contexts: Belgium and Sweden. In general, we expect to observe the same patterns (H1–H6) in both countries. We do not formulate a hypothesis about the country differences in the probability of moving towards parents or children. We refrain from doing so because the different sizes of the municipalities in Belgium and Sweden make the direct comparison difficult. However, we expect that in Belgium, a stronger family ties context, the location of parents (H7) and children (H8) are particularly strongly associated with migration following separation and transition to widowhood, compared to Sweden.

4 | DATA AND METHODS

4.1 | Data

This paper analysed Belgian and Swedish register-based data. Register data provide a unique opportunity to follow the whole population of separated older individuals and their moves following relationship dissolution. The Belgian data set DEMOBEL is a demographic register-based data set provided by Statbel (Statistics Belgium, 2019). The Swedish data set is also register-based, containing the main demographics of all inhabitants in Sweden. The socioeconomic variables were derived from LISA (Longitudinal Integrated Database for Health Insurance and Labour Market Studies), which provides annual information (Statistics Sweden, 2016). These two datasets contain largely comparable information on age, gender, place of residence, household composition, family ties, and educational attainment. The data used in this paper contain register-based information from 2002 and 2012–2014 and socioeconomic data from 2011 (BE: census based; SE: LISA-based).

4.2 | Sample selection

Our sample consists of all individuals aged 50–70 years living with their opposite-sex spouse in 2012 (BE: 1,764,582; SE: 1,299,095). We limit the sample to married couples to ensure the compatibility of samples across the countries. From these, we additionally select individuals who have at least one child or one parent alive and residing in the country in 2014, i.e. at the moment of assessing whether the move occurred and if it did, in which direction (BE: 1,616,018; SE: 1,282,882). We observe partnership status transitions between 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013.¹ Because a move following a partnership transition may not occur immediately, we allow an additional year after the partnership transition to observe the move. Thus, we observe the change (or lack thereof) in the residential situation between 2012 and 2014. We excluded from the analysis those who experienced separation or widowhood between 2013 and 2014 (BE: 21,900; SE: 14,960) because the move connected to their partnership status change might take place after 2014. The final sample consisted of 816,917 men and 777,201 women in the Belgian data set and 615,539 men and 604,100 women in the Swedish data set.

4.3 | Analytical strategy

We employ a two-stage modelling strategy. In the first stage, we use logistic regression to estimate the propensity of changing one's location as opposed to remaining in place. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of a residential change. The move is assessed by

¹We select years close to the census date in 2011 from which we derive the socioeconomic information.

comparing municipality of residence in January 2012 and 2014. If the person resides in a different municipality in 2014 than in 2012, the individual is considered to have moved.² We do not consider moves within the same municipality.

We base the measurement of mobility and family ties on the information about the municipality of residence. The municipality is the smallest comparable spatial unit in our data, and at the same time, it is a meaningful unit of analysis. Municipalities structure people's everyday lives in important ways. They provide local infrastructure, a sense of identity, and location-specific capital. As of 2014, there were 589 municipalities in Belgium and 290 in Sweden. In Belgium, the municipalities are on average smaller than in Sweden. The number of inhabitants in Belgian municipalities ranges from 85 to 510,610 with a mean of 20,887 and a mean area of 52 km², whereas in Swedish municipalities the number of inhabitants ranges from 2447 to 912,401 with a mean of 133,776 and a mean area of 1822 km².

Our main independent variable captures partnership transition and distinguishes between three categories. Individuals are considered continuously married if they were married and lived with a partner throughout 2012, 2013 and 2014. Couples who separated between 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013 but again lived with their spouse in 2014 are also considered as continuously married. Such cases may occur if the partners do not register the move at the same time or may signal temporary residential separation; these cases are quite rare (617 in Belgian data, 114 in Swedish data). Separation refers to a situation where married partners who resided in the same household in 2012 no longer resided in the same household for two consecutive years, in 2013 and 2014. Finally, widowhood refers to the death of one of the partners between 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013.

Ties to family are derived from the residential information of children and parents. We distinguish between resident and non-resident children but do not distinguish between resident and non-resident parents as there are relatively few cases of parents being residents (BE: 10,350, SE: 7489). The variable referring to resident children has three categories: at least one minor resident child, only adult (i.e., aged 18 or older) resident children, and no resident children. The variable referring to non-resident children considers the location of these children and acquires has categories: at least one non-resident child living nearby (in the same municipality), no non-resident child living nearby, and no non-resident children. Regarding parents, we distinguish between at least one parent living nearby (in the same municipality or household), no parent living nearby, and no parents alive or living in the country.

We further include several other characteristics of the individuals: age and age squared (continuous), level of education (primary, secondary, tertiary, missing), and indicator of long-term residence (a

binary indicator of whether an individual lives in the same municipality as in 2002; 1=yes). We also include several controls at the municipality level. We control for size of municipality and the proportion of inhabitants older than 65 to approximate the attractiveness of the place among older individuals. Both measures are standardised (i.e., rescaled to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1). We also control for the degree of urbanisation, using three categories—urban, suburban and rural. The municipality-level variables refer to the current municipality in Models 1 and 2 and to destination municipalities in Models 3 and 4.

We estimate two logistic regression models for men and women in each country. Model 1 includes all independent and control variables and tests hypothesis H1. Model 2 adds to Model 1 an interaction between partnership transition and ties to children and an interaction between partnership transition and ties to parents. The interaction terms allow us to explore how family ties in the place of residence affect the moving decisions of individuals with different partnership histories and test hypothesis H2. Both models include clustered standard errors at the municipality level.

In the second stage of our modelling strategy, we use discrete-choice models to model the choice of destination among those who moved (BE: 30,575; SE: 26,222). Discrete-choice models (also referred to as conditional logit models) are convenient tools for modelling decisions where the choice is constrained to a limited number of options. Potential destination municipalities are conceptualised as geographical units with different combinations of attributes, and the choice of a particular municipality is based on the availability of these attributes (Bruch & Mare, 2006). Discrete-choice models are commonly used, for example, for modelling neighbourhood choices.³

Discrete-choice models require defining a choice set. Theoretically, Belgian residents who are moving out of their current municipality within the country can choose from among 588 other municipalities. Swedish individuals can choose between 289 other municipalities. We needed to limit the number of alternative choices to make the models computationally feasible. Thus, we adopted a strategy similar to Spring et al. (2017) to include in the choice set the most theoretically important municipalities for each individual—that is, the chosen municipality and all municipalities where a child or a parent resides. We completed the set of choices with a random selection from the remaining municipalities, so that the final choice set for each individual included 59 municipalities for Belgium and 29 municipalities for Sweden (i.e., 10% of the total number of municipalities in each country). Each model includes sampling weights which represent the differential probabilities of inclusion of each municipality in the choice set (for more detail see Spring et al., 2017).

²A move may have theoretically occurred before the partnership transition. In the case of separation, the move is usually connected to separation. Where there are more moves within the same year, we are unable to distinguish which moves occurred before or after the separation in our data. In the case of widowhood, we intentionally keep moves that may have preceded widowhood as a move may take place in anticipation of the spouse's death.

³Theoretically, it would have been possible to also include those who did not make a move, as remaining in the current municipality is also a choice. We decided to adopt the two-step modelling strategy rather than model the choice of staying or moving jointly in the discrete-choice model. First, the logistic regression model allows us to include more variables in the model allowing better understand the choice between staying and moving. Second, the interpretation of discrete-choice models provides clearly interpretable findings for the destination choices of movers.

Choice models only allow us to include variables that vary across the potential choices or that are interacted with them. The first set of models (Model 3) includes only variables that vary across the destination municipalities. The two main independent variables are an indicator of the presence of a child (1=child present), and an indicator of the presence of a parent (1=parent present). The presence of a child and a parent is derived from the residential information of parents and children in year 2014. In some instances, (BE: 5%, SE: 7% of movers), the ego and a family member who initially lived in distinct municipalities, made a move to the same—third municipality in the observed period. In such cases, it is not clear who moved to whom and such uncertainty introduces noise in our data. Because the presence of family ties is central to this research we drop these cases from the analysis. Control variables further include the size of the municipality, the proportion of individuals 65+ living in the municipality, the logged distance from the current municipality, and the degree of urbanisation. In the second set of discrete-choice models (Model 4), we introduce an interaction between partnership transition (separation, widowhood, or no transition) and the presence of a child, and an interaction between partnership transition and the presence of a parent. By doing so, we can assess whether the presence of family members influences the choice of municipality differently for individuals who experienced separation or widowhood or who remained married and test hypotheses H3 and H4.

We run the analyses (logistic regression and discrete-choice models) separately for men and women as well as for the Belgian and Swedish datasets. We present the results in coefficients and report their standard errors. To statistically assess the differences between men and women and assess the hypotheses H5 and H6, we additionally run a set of models where we include a three-way interaction between gender, partnership transition, and family-tie indicator. We comment on the significant gender differences in the Results section (detailed results available upon request). Due to the legal restrictions on register-based datasets, we are unable to pool the data and test the differences between the countries in a single model. To explore the differences between the countries and test the hypotheses H7 and H8, we perform a post-estimation *t*-test for independent samples,⁴ following the strategy of Smits et al. (2003). We report the results of the *t* test in tables. We also estimated the average marginal effects of Model 1 to check the consistency of the models in terms of comparability and robustness. Unfortunately, average marginal effects could not be calculated for the discrete-choice models within a feasible time frame (i.e., 1 week) given the large size of the data sets.

To ensure the results are robust, we performed several robustness checks. In the first, we ran the models restricting the sample to individuals who have at least one non-resident parent and one non-resident child living in the country. We perform this additional analysis to assess the mobility behaviour in the instances when children and parents could constitute competing choices, which

further helps us understand the importance of family ties on mobility choices following separation and widowhood. The subsample consists of 345,318 (BE) and 394,022 (SE) individuals present in the logit models and 7214 (BE) and 8618 (SE) individuals analysed in the choice models. The results of this analysis are presented in the Appendix. Second, we estimated logistic regression models including the employment status variable, which could not be harmonised across the countries (Belgium: employed, retired, unemployed, caregiver/other, missing; Sweden: employed, retired, unemployed). The results are available upon request.

5 | RESULTS

The compositions of the Belgian and Swedish samples are largely similar. The descriptive results are presented in Tables 1 and 2. In both samples, about 2% of individuals moved in the 2 years. Those who experienced separation comprise 0.63% of the Belgian sample and 0.55% of the Swedish sample; for widowhood the figures are 0.68% of Belgians and 0.56% of Swedes. The samples are also comparable in terms of mean age, educational attainment and general mobility. For our sample, in Belgium, having resident children is more common (BE: 36%, SE: 23%). non-resident children in both countries tend to live quite close to their parents. Among those with non-resident children, 51% (BE) and 61% (SE) live in the same municipality as the child. Those with parents who are alive and living in the country comprise 34% (BE) and 41% (SE) of cases; in these cases, a greater proportion of these parents lived in the same municipality as their children in Sweden as compared to Belgium. The higher percentage of family members living in the same municipality may be a reflection of the different geographic characteristics of Belgian and Swedish municipalities, with the Swedish ones being on average larger. Also, a higher share of Belgian residents lived in an urban area, whereas a higher share of Swedish residents lived in a rural area.

5.1 | The likelihood of moving to a different municipality

The logistic regression models with the dependent variable indicating a move are presented in Table 3 (Model 1) and Table 4 (Model 2). In both countries, partnership transitions are associated with a higher likelihood of moving than being continuously married, and the propensity to move is higher for those who separated than for widows/widowers (Model 1 in Table 3), supporting our first hypothesis. Separated men and women in Belgium are more likely to make a move than their separated counterparts in Sweden. Having children or parents in the current municipality is negatively associated with mobility for men and women in both countries, as compared to having children or parents in a different municipality.

Importantly, the association between partnership transition and mobility varies according to the location of non-resident children and

⁴The formula for comparison of the coefficients is $Z = \frac{b_{\text{Belgium}} - b_{\text{Sweden}}}{\sqrt{SE_{\text{Belgium}}^2 + SE_{\text{Sweden}}^2}}$ (Paternoster et al., 1998).

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics. Categorical variables.

		Belgium		Sweden	
		N	%	N	%
Move between 2012 and 2014	No	1,561,924	97.98	1,191,414	97.69
	Yes	32,194	2.02	28,225	2.31
Partnership transition	Married	1,572,938	98.67	1,206,076	98.89
	Separated	10,382	0.65	6727	0.55
	Widowed	10,798	0.68	6836	0.56
Education	Primary	270,004	16.94	245,863	20.16
	Secondary	862,380	54.10	611,757	50.16
	Tertiary	389,332	24.42	358,978	29.43
	Missing	72,402	4.54	3041	0.25
Living in the same municipality as 2002	No	159,796	10.02	134,879	11.06
	Yes	1,434,322	89.98	1,084,760	88.94
Resident children	No resident children	950,467	59.62	869,678	71.31
	Only adult resident children	65,285	4.10	65,383	5.36
	At least one minor resident child	578,366	36.28	284,578	23.33
Non-resident children	No non-resident children	338,053	21.21	174,998	14.35
	Non-resident child not in the municipality	611,935	38.39	407,921	33.45
	At least one non-resident child in the municipality	644,130	40.41	636,720	52.21
Non-resident parents	No parents	1,050,922	65.92	724,379	59.39
	Parent(s) in a different municipality	291,161	18.26	233,516	19.15
	Parent(s) in the same municipality	252,035	15.81	261,744	21.46
Degree of urbanisation	Urban	546,204	34.26	324,322	26.59
	Suburban	605,751	38.00	470,438	38.57
	Rural	442,163	27.74	424,879	34.84
Total		1,594,118	100.00	1,219,639	100.00

TABLE 2 Descriptive statistics. Continuous variables.

	Belgium				Sweden			
	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age	58.97	5.82	50	70	60.31	5.98	50.00	70
Proportion of 65+	0.18	0.03	0.08	0.34	0.21	0.04	0.13	0.32
Population size of the municipality	54,750	95,746	85	510,610	133,359	225,235	2447	912,401
Observations	1,594,118				1,219,639			

parents (Model 2 in Table 4). Parents living in the same municipality weaken the positive association between separation and mobility for Belgian women ($B = -0.460$, $p < 0.001$), Belgian men ($B = -0.631$, $p < 0.001$) and Swedish men ($B = -0.367$, $p < 0.05$). Further, for women in Belgium, the positive association between widowhood and mobility is weaker if parents live in the same municipality ($B = -0.599$,

$p < 0.05$). We also observe this pattern for women in Sweden, although it did not reach statistical significance.

The positive association between separation and mobility increases for men if they only have children in the same municipality. We observe the same pattern for both countries, although it only reaches statistical significance in Belgium ($B = 0.393$, $p < 0.001$). We

TABLE 3 Logistic regression models (Model 1) of migration to another municipality between 2012 and 2014 for men and women in Belgium and Sweden.

	Men, M1				Women, M1				
	Belgium		Sweden		Belgium		Sweden		
	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	
Partnership transition									
Married (ref.)									
Separated	3.185***	0.068	2.281***	0.075	3.138***	0.073	2.402***	0.094	0.736***
Widowed	0.951***	0.086	1.024***	0.107	1.047***	0.066	1.238***	0.069	-0.191
Non-resident children									
Non-resident child not in the municipality (ref.)									
No non-resident children	-0.455***	0.025	-0.611***	0.034	-0.461***	0.030	-0.609***	0.037	0.148**
At least one non-resident child in municipality	-0.797***	0.025	-0.914***	0.035	-0.862***	0.024	-1.064***	0.039	0.202***
Non-resident parents									
Parent(s) in a different municipality (ref.)									
No parents	-0.173***	0.025	-0.164***	0.025	-0.197***	0.026	-0.189***	0.022	-0.008
Parent(s) in the same municipality	-0.530***	0.039	-0.580***	0.043	-0.574***	0.037	-0.688***	0.053	0.114
Age	0.134***	0.032	0.083*	0.036	0.211***	0.037	0.198***	0.043	0.013
Age squared	-0.001***	0.000	-0.001*	0.000	-0.002***	0.000	-0.002***	0.000	0.000
Education									
Lower secondary (ref.)									
Higher secondary, Post-secondary	-0.083**	0.027	0.055*	0.023	-0.030	0.026	0.047	0.030	-0.077
Tertiary	-0.113***	0.032	0.198***	0.036	-0.143***	0.031	0.114**	0.035	-0.257***
Missing	0.193***	0.036	0.341*	0.134	0.221***	0.046	0.309*	0.135	-0.088
Living in the same municipality as 2002									
No (ref.)									
Yes	-1.273***	0.031	-1.046***	0.031	-1.311***	0.031	-1.035***	0.029	-0.276***
Resident children									
No resident children (ref.)									
Only adult resident children	0.014	0.036	-0.246***	0.047	-0.121*	0.053	-0.233***	0.056	0.112
At least one minor resident child	-0.210***	0.028	-0.174***	0.031	-0.175***	0.027	-0.233***	0.028	0.058
Degree of urbanisation									
Urban (ref.)									
Suburban	-0.303***	0.045	0.167*	0.075	-0.241***	0.046	0.151*	0.074	-0.392***
Rural	-0.473***	0.048	0.175*	0.080	-0.407***	0.048	0.169*	0.080	-0.576***
Standardised values of proportion 65+	-0.080*	0.033	-0.221***	0.023	-0.068*	0.030	-0.216***	0.023	0.148**
Standardised values of size of municipality	0.012	0.012	0.004	0.034	0.038***	0.011	0.017	0.030	0.021
Constant	-5.628***	0.954	-4.601***	1.081	-7.780***	1.085	-7.770***	1.316	-0.010
No. of observations	816,917		615,539		777,201		604,100		

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

*Significance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

TABLE 4 Logistic regression models (Model 2) of migration to another municipality with interaction effects between 2012 and 2014 for men and women in Belgium and Sweden.

	Men, M2			Women, M2			Difference	
	Belgium		Sweden	Belgium		Sweden	BE-SE ^a	
	B	SE(B)	B	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	BE-SE ^a
Partnership transition								
Married (ref.)								
Separated	3.306***	0.076	2.585***	0.094	3.327***	0.087	2.636***	0.114
Widowed	1.047***	0.242	1.228***	0.198	1.310***	0.161	1.433***	0.149
Non-resident children								
Non-resident child not in the municipality (ref.)								
No non-resident children	-0.480***	0.026	-0.600***	0.033	-0.455***	0.030	-0.592***	0.037
At least one non-resident child in municipality	-0.821***	0.028	-0.920***	0.039	-0.851***	0.025	-1.046***	0.041
Non-resident parents								
Parent(s) in a different municipality (ref.)								
No parents	-0.138***	0.047	-0.141***	0.026	-0.179***	0.026	-0.180***	0.023
Parent(s) in the same municipality	-0.470***	0.040	-0.564***	0.044	-0.528***	0.039	-0.687***	0.055
Interaction terms								
No non-resident children # separated	0.299***	0.082	-0.141	0.106	0.029	0.096	-0.177	0.136
No non-resident children # widowed	0.051	0.268	-0.172	0.326	-0.494*	0.196	-0.430	0.261
At least one non-resident child in municipality # separated	0.393***	0.104	0.154	0.162	-0.029	0.101	-0.086	0.145
At least one non-resident child in municipality # widowed	-0.101	0.222	-0.077	0.227	-0.364**	0.139	-0.689***	0.156
Age								
Age squared	-0.001	0.0003	0.138	0.0321	0.086*	0.036	0.200***	0.043
Education								
Lower secondary (ref.)								
Higher secondary, Post-secondary	-0.083***	0.027	0.055*	0.023	-0.137***	0.026	0.046	0.0304
Tertiary	-0.114***	0.032	0.198***	0.036	-0.312***	0.031	0.114**	0.035
Missing	0.194***	0.036	0.335*	0.134	0.222***	0.046	0.310*	0.134
Living in the same municipality as in 2002 (ref.)								
Living in same municipality as in 2002	-1.277***	0.031	-1.048***	0.031	-1.313***	0.031	-1.038***	0.0284

(Continues)

TABLE 4 (Continued)

	Men, M2			Women, M2			Difference BE-SE ^a	SE(B)	Difference BE-SE ^a
	Belgium		Sweden	Belgium		Sweden			
	B	SE(B)	B	B	SE(B)	B			
Resident children									
No resident children (ref.)									
Only adult resident children	0.015	0.036	-0.245***	0.047	0.260***	-0.126*	0.053	-0.234***	0.108
At least one minor resident child	-0.209***	0.028	-0.175***	0.031	-0.034	-0.176***	0.027	-0.233***	0.057
Degree of urbanisation									
Urban (ref.)									
Suburban	-0.303***	0.045	0.167*	0.075***	-0.47	-0.241***	0.046	0.152*	-0.393***
Rural	-0.472***	0.048	0.175*	0.080***	-0.647	-0.408***	0.048	0.170*	-0.578***
Standardised values of proportion 65+	-0.080*	0.033	-0.222***	0.023***	0.142	-0.068*	0.030	-0.217***	0.149***
Standardised values of size of municipality	0.012	0.012	0.004	0.034	0.007	0.038***	0.011	0.017	0.021
Constant	-5.739***	0.958	-4.715***	1.082	-1.024	-7.888***	1.091	-7.863***	-0.025
No. of observations	816,917		615,539			777,201		604,100	

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.^aSignificance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

do not observe a similar effect for separated women. For both countries, the positive association between widowhood and mobility is weaker for women, but not men, with a child living in the same municipality.

These results are only partly in line with the H2. Parents seem to deter migration, especially following separation, and children following maternal widowhood. Nevertheless, the presence of non-resident children, especially for men who experienced separation can result in a higher propensity of moving.

Noteworthy, the association between educational attainment and probability of moving differs in Belgium and Sweden. While in Sweden higher educated individuals are more likely to move, in Belgium, changing location is more likely among lower educated individuals. It might be that in the age group 50- to 70-years-old mobility in Belgium is connected to some level of precariousness. Our findings alligns with previous study, which documented that lower educated women are more likely to move at separation than their higher educated counterparts (Zilincikova & Schnor, 2021).

5.2 | Location choice

The discrete-choice models, which analyse the choice of the municipality among the movers, are displayed in Tables 5 and 6. The first notable pattern is that parents and children are important attractors of mobility. They increase the probability, for men and women who move, of moving to the municipality of children or parents, in both Belgium and Sweden. Additional models with gender interaction showed that women, in general, experience greater pull from the family than men in line with H5. Family, seem to be a stronger factor in a move in Sweden compared to Belgium (Model 3, Table 5), which might be connected to the fact that Swedish municipalities are substantially larger.

5.2.1 | Presence of parents in the municipality

The attractiveness of having a parent in a given municipality is stronger among men and women who experienced separation or widowhood than for continuously married individuals. We observe this effect almost universally, even though the effect is not always significant (Model 4). Whether separation or widowhood increases the attractiveness of having a parent in the municipality to a larger extent differs for women compared to men and for Belgium compared to Sweden. In Belgium, men who became widowers experienced a larger 'pull' towards the municipality where their parents live ($B = 1.868$, $p < 0.001$) compared to men who separated ($B = 1.196$, $p < 0.001$). In Sweden, separated men are particularly likely to move to the municipality of their parents ($B = 0.691$, $p < 0.001$), whereas men who became widowers are not significantly more likely to move to their parents' municipality than married men. For women in Belgium, the 'pull' effect of parents is stronger for separation ($B = 1.488$, $p < 0.001$) and non-significant for widowhood,

TABLE 5 Conditional logit models (Model 3) of municipality choice among movers for men and women in Belgium and Sweden.

	Men, M3		Women, M3		Difference				
	Belgium		Sweden		BE-SE ^a				
	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)			
Presence of family	1.811***	-0.054	1.923***	-0.061	2.050***	-0.06	2.433***	-0.059	-0.383***
Child in the municipality	2.201***	-0.028	2.539***	-0.03	2.711***	-0.028	3.117***	-0.029	-0.406**
Standardised values of municipality size	0.265***	-0.004	0.223***	-0.007	0.252***	-0.005	0.184***	-0.007	0.068***
Standardised values of proportion 65+ in the municipality	0.588**	-0.009	0.217***	-0.014	0.626***	-0.009	0.235***	-0.015	0.391***
Logged distance to the municipality	-2.188***	-0.012	-1.567***	-0.012	-2.077***	-0.012	-1.469***	-0.012	-0.608***
Degree of urbanisation									
Urban municipality (ref.)									
Suburban municipality	0.0404	-0.024	-0.555***	-0.037	0.0677**	-0.026	-0.435***	-0.039	0.503***
Rural municipality	0.238***	-0.029	-0.763***	-0.043	0.254***	-0.031	-0.641***	-0.044	0.895***
No. of movers	16,293		13,404		14,282		12,818		
No. of observations (person-municipality)	961,287		388,716		842,638		371,722		

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.^aSignificance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

whereas in Sweden we observe a significant effect only for widowed women ($B = 2.121$, $p < 0.001$). These results clearly show that losing a partner through widowhood or separation increases the pull effect of parents, but the extent of the pull seems to be gender- and context-dependent, thus not providing clear support for H3. Further, except for separated women, the presence of parents is not a stronger attraction factor following separation or widowhood in Belgium than in Sweden, not supporting hypothesis H7.

5.2.2 | Presence of children in the municipality

Contrary to what we expected (H4), separation reduces the likelihood of choosing the home municipality of one's child as one's residential destination (Model 4, Table 6), and this finding is consistent across men and women in both countries. The negative association is stronger for men in Belgium ($B = -0.886$, $p < 0.001$) and Sweden ($B = -0.778$, $p < 0.001$) than for women in Belgium ($B = -0.395$, $p < 0.001$) and in Sweden ($B = -0.306$, $p < 0.05$). The additional model including a three-way interaction between gender, partnership transition and presence of a child (available upon request) showed that the gender differences are statistically significant in both countries, which is in line with hypothesis H6. Widowhood increases the pull effect of a child compared to being continuously married for Belgian men and women as well as for Swedish women. For Swedish widowed men, the interaction is also in the positive direction, yet, insignificant. The presence of children is not a stronger attractor for a move in Belgium than in Sweden around partnership transition. We thus do not find support for hypothesis H8.

5.3 | Robustness checks

To ensure the robustness of our results, we performed several additional checks. First, we restricted the sample to individuals with at least one non-resident parent and at least one non-resident child present. The results of the logit and choice models of the restricted sample are presented in the Appendix (Tables A1–A4). We observed similar results as in the whole sample. Even in the set-up where parents and children could constitute competing attractions, children seemed to attract move to a somewhat larger extent than parents. Unlike the results of the main models presented in this paper, separated women in Belgium and Sweden were as likely to move towards children as continuously married women. This result might be related to the characteristics of our subsample (e.g., being younger). We can speculate that younger continuously married women are in general less likely to move towards children. Separated mothers thus 'stand out' less than in comparison to the whole population of women.

The results are robust for the inclusion of employment in the logistic regression model. The effect size of partnership transition and family ties in both countries remained almost unchanged. Finally, the comparison of average marginal effects confirmed the comparability

TABLE 6 Conditional logit models (Model 4) of municipality choice among movers with interaction effects for men and women in Belgium and Sweden.

	Men, M4				Women, M4				Difference BE-SE ^a
	Belgium		Sweden		Belgium		Sweden		
	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	
Presence of family									
Parent in the municipality	1.547***	-0.063	1.851***	-0.065	1.747***	-0.069	2.382***	-0.063	-0.635***
Child in the municipality	2.281***	-0.029	2.570***	-0.03	2.720***	-0.029	3.100***	-0.029	-0.380***
Interaction terms									
Married # parent in the municipality (ref.)									
Separated # parent in the municipality	1.196***	-0.127	0.691***	-0.193	1.488***	-0.145	0.193	-0.215	1.295***
Widowed # parent in the municipality	1.868**	-0.624	0.384	-0.622	0.832	-0.508	2.121***	-0.428	-1.289
Married # child in the municipality (ref.)									
Separated # child in the municipality	-0.886***	-0.096	-0.778***	-0.129	-0.395***	-0.096	-0.306*	-0.128	-0.089
Widowed # child in the municipality	0.996***	-0.287	0.464	-0.258	0.838***	-0.153	1.079***	-0.157	-0.241
Standardised values of municipality size	0.265***	-0.004	0.223***	-0.007	0.253***	-0.005	0.184***	-0.007	0.069***
Standardised values of proportion 65+ in the municipality	0.589***	-0.009	0.218***	-0.014	0.626***	-0.009	0.235***	-0.015	0.391***
Logged distance to the municipality	-2.189***	-0.012	-1.568***	-0.012	-2.079***	-0.012	-1.469***	-0.012	-0.610***
Degree of urbanisation									
Urban municipality (ref.)									
Suburban municipality	0.0425	-0.024	-0.558***	-0.037	0.0681**	-0.026	-0.436***	-0.039	0.504***
Rural municipality	0.238***	-0.029	-0.767***	-0.043	0.256***	-0.031	-0.640***	-0.045	0.896***
No. of movers	16,293		13,404		14,282		12,818		
No. of observations (person-municipality)	961,287		388,716		842,638		371,722		

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.^aSignificance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

of the results and our conclusions. The average marginal effects for Model 1 are presented in Table A5 in the Appendix.

6 | DISCUSSION

This paper explored geographic mobility following widowhood and separation among 50-to-70-year-olds living in Belgium and Sweden. In particular, we were interested in how mobility and destination choice are influenced by the geographic location of the closest family members—children and parents. The choice models we applied in this study enabled us to simultaneously evaluate the importance of location of children and parents and move beyond the standard dyadic approach. Data for the analysis were drawn from Belgian and Swedish register data (2012–2014).

We found general patterns in both countries that confirm findings in previous studies. Both widowhood and separation elevated mobility, separation to a much larger extent than widowhood. This finding is in line with previous research on mobility among older individuals (e.g., Evandrou et al., 2010). The geographical proximity of children and parents discouraged migration, while children and parents living in different locations than ego acted as an attractor for a move. In line with several previous studies (Pettersson & Malmberg, 2009; Smits, 2010; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020; Van Diepen & Mulder, 2009), we demonstrate the importance of family ties in the mobility decision.

Adding to the previous studies, we found that the patterns of mobility around separation and widowhood differ both from each other and from those of continuously married individuals. The presence of children in the current location plays an especially important role as an anchor for women following widowhood, whereas the presence of parents generally grows in importance following separation. Parents also constitute an important attractor for separated and widowed men and women in both countries. This confirms the findings of previous studies that focus on separation among younger individuals (Albertini et al., 2018; Das et al., 2017; Smits, 2010), suggesting that parents continue to be an important source of support even in older ages. In contrast, the location of children decreases in attractiveness following separation, especially among men. This points to the potentially disruptive effect of separation on descending family ties and its gendered effect. These findings are contradictory to what was suggested in previous studies (e.g., Smits, 2010; Thomas & Dommermuth, 2020). We do not find support for a hypothesis that support needs created by separation would motivate a move towards children in the 50–70 age group. In line with previous findings (Smits, 2010), children generally increase the attractiveness of a location after widowhood.

The comparison between Belgium and Sweden was more a story of similarities than differences. Even though the geographies of the two countries are different which makes it difficult to compare the magnitudes of the anchor effect and pull effect of the family ties, we

have shown that family is crucial for mobility decisions in both countries. In both countries, separation and widowhood increased or decreased the attractiveness of a family location to a similar extent. This could suggest that support from family is activated in contexts of weaker as well as stronger family ties.

The register data used for this analysis constitute unique and high-quality data where information about family networks is accessible. The data also proved comparable between Belgium and Sweden. Cross-country comparisons using register data remain rare, especially outside of the Nordic context. Nevertheless, we faced some limitations. With register data, we observe the registered reality, which may differ from actual behaviour. For example, registers do not provide information about short-term moves, and the actual move may occur at a different point in time than its registration. We also had to limit the analysis to variables which could be harmonised across the datasets, and for similar reasons we restricted the analysis to marital couples. We were not able to pool the data from the two countries together and test the differences between the countries in a more straightforward way. Finally, the geographic characteristics of the two countries are different. Swedish municipalities are on average more than 6 times larger in terms of number of inhabitants and 35 times larger in terms of area, and thus are not necessarily equivalent to the Belgian ones.

Despite these limitations, our findings provide strong evidence of distinct mobility patterns following separation and widowhood, and that these patterns are gendered in both countries. Thus, these events should not be considered equivalent in future mobility studies. Future studies might experiment with including more characteristics of children and parents as attributes of potential destinations or including the location of more family members, for example, siblings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors acknowledge support from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (FamilyTies project: grant agreement No. 740113 (2017–2022), PI: Clara H. Mulder, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen). This project was also supported by Swedish Research Council (VR, grant number 2019-00245) and NetResilience consortium funded by the Strategic Research Council at the Academy of Finland (grant number 345183). The authors also thank Statbel (Directorate-General Statistics—Statistics Belgium) for access to the Demobel (adaptation of the National Register) and Census 2001 data. Computational resources were provided by the supercomputing facilities of the Université Catholique de Louvain (CISM/UCL) and the Consortium des Équipements de Calcul Intensif en Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles (CÉCI), funded by the Fond de la Recherche Scientifique de Belgique (F.R.S.-FNRS) under convention 2.5020.11 and by the Walloon Region. Access to Swedish register data was supported by Ageing Well research programme led by Prof. Dr Gunnar Andersson at the Demography Unit of the University of Stockholm. The Ageing Well research programme has received funding from the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (Forte Project No. 2016-07115).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from Statistics Belgium and Statistics Sweden. Restrictions apply to the availability of these data, which were used under license for this study.

ORCID

Zuzana Zilincikova  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4182-1123>

Maria Brandén  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6932-6496>

REFERENCES

- Abramsson, M., & Andersson, E. (2016). Changing preferences with ageing—Housing choices and housing plans of older people. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 33(2), 217–241. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14036096.2015.1104385>
- Albertini, M., Gähler, M., & Härkönen, J. (2018). Moving back to “mamma”? Divorce, intergenerational coresidence, and latent family solidarity in Sweden. *Population, Space and Place*, 24(6), e2142. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2142>
- Andersson, E., & Abramsson, M. (2012). Changing residential mobility rates of older people in Sweden. *Ageing and Society*, 32(6), 963–982. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X11000808>
- Angelini, V., & Laferrère, A. (2012). Residential mobility of the European elderly. *CESifo Economic Studies*, 58(3), 544–569. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cesifo/ifr017>
- Angelini, V., Laferrère, A., & Weber, G. (2011). Homeownership in old age at the crossroad between personal and national histories. In A. Börsch-Supan, M. Brandt, K. Hank & M. Schröder (Eds.), *The individual and the welfare state: Life histories in Europe* (pp. 81–92). Springer Berlin Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-17472-8_7
- Angelini, V., Laferrère, A., & Weber, G. (2013). Home-ownership in Europe: How did it happen? *Advances in Life Course Research*, 18(1), 83–90. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcr.2012.10.006>
- Araos, C., & Siles, C. (2021). “Juntos pero no revueltos”: Family residential dependence and care vulnerabilities along the life course. *Advances in Life Course Research*, 49, 100404. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcr.2021.100404>
- Artamonova, A., Gillespie, B. J., & Brandén, M. (2020). Geographic mobility among older people and their adult children: The role of parents' health issues and family ties. *Population, Space and Place*, 26(8), e2371. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2371>
- Bell, M., & Muhidin, S. (2009). *Cross-national comparisons of internal migration. Human Development Research Paper 2009/30*. United Nations Development Programme.
- Berck, P., Tano, S., & Westerlund, O. (2016). Regional sorting of human capital: The choice of location among young adults in Sweden. *Regional Studies*, 50(5), 757–770. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2014.931935>
- Bonnet, C., Gobillon, L., & Laferrère, A. (2010). The effect of widowhood on housing and location choices. *Journal of Housing Economics*, 19, 94–108. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhe.2010.04.003>
- Bordone, V. (2009). Contact and proximity of older people to their adult children: A comparison between Italy and Sweden. *Population, Space and Place*, 15(4), 359–380. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.559>
- Brown, S. L., & Lin, I. F. (2012). The gray divorce revolution: Rising divorce among middle-aged and older adults, 1990–2010. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 67(6), 731–741. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbs089>
- Brown, S. L., Lin, I. F., Hammersmith, A. M., & Wright, M. R. (2019). Repartnering following gray divorce: The roles of resources and constraints for women and men. *Demography*, 56(2), 503–523. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-018-0752-x>
- Bruch, E. E., & Mare, R. D. (2006). Neighborhood choice and neighborhood change. *American Journal of Sociology*, 112(3), 667–709. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0081175012444105>
- Bures, R. M. (2009). Moving the nest: The impact of coresidential children on mobility in later midlife. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30(6), 837–851. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X09332349>
- Campbell, K. E., Marsden, P. V., & Hurlbert, J. S. (1986). Social resources and socioeconomic status. *Social Networks*, 8(1), 97–117. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-8733\(86\)80017-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-8733(86)80017-X)
- APA. (2020). *Adulthood—APA dictionary of psychology*. American Psychological Association. <https://dictionary.apa.org/adulthood>
- Clark, W. A. V. (2013). Life course events and residential change: Unpacking age effects on the probability of moving. *Journal of Population Research*, 30(4), 319–334. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12546-013-9116-y>
- Champion, T., Cooke, T., & Shuttleworth, I. (Eds.). (2018). *Internal migration in the developed world: Are we becoming less mobile?* Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315589282>
- Clark, W. A. V., Duque-Calvache, R., & Palomares-Linares, I. (2017). Place attachment and the decision to stay in the neighbourhood. *Population, Space and Place*, 23(2), e2001. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2001>
- Conway, K. S., & Houtenville, A. J. (2003). Out with the old, in with the old: A closer look at younger versus older elderly migration. *Social Science Quarterly*, 84(2), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-6237.8402006>
- Coulter, R., Ham, M., & Findlay, A. M. (2016). Re-thinking residential mobility: Linking lives through time and space. *Progress in Human Geography*, 40(3), 352–374. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132515575417>
- Das, M., de Valk, H., & Merz, E. M. (2017). Mothers' mobility after separation: Do grandmothers matter? *Population, Space and Place*, 23(2), e2010. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2010>
- David, Q., Janiak, A., & Wasmer, E. (2010). Local social capital and geographical mobility. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 68(2), 191–204. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2010.04.003>
- De Graaf, P. M., & Fokkema, T. (2006). Contacts between divorced and non-divorced parents and their adult children in the Netherlands: An investment perspective. *European Sociological Review*, 23(2), 263–277. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcl032>
- Devos, C., Cordon, A., Lefevre, M., Obyn, C., Renard, F., Bouckaert, N., & Meeus, P. (2019). *Performance of the Belgian health system—report 2019*. <https://www.healthybelgium.be/metadata/hspa/eld3.pdf>
- Duncombe, W., Robbins, M., & Wolf, D. A. (2003). Place characteristics and residential location choice among the retirement-age population. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 58(4), S244–S252. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/58.4.S244>
- Dykstra, P. (1997). The effects of divorce on intergenerational exchanges in families. *The Netherlands Journal of Social Sciences*, 33(2), 77–93.
- Elder Jr., G. H. (1994). Time, human agency, and social change: Perspectives on the life course. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 57(1), 4–15. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2786971>
- Evandrou, M., Falkingham, J., & Green, M. (2010). Migration in later life: Evidence from the British Household Panel Study. *Population Trends*, 141, 77–94. <https://doi.org/10.1057/pt.2010.22>
- Fernández-Carro, C., & Evandrou, M. (2014). Staying put: Factors associated with ageing in one's “lifetime home”; Insights from the European context. *Research on Ageing and Social Policy*, 2(1), 28–56. <https://doi.org/10.4471/rasp.2014.02>

- Fingerman, K. L., Huo, M., & Birditt, K. S. (2020). Mothers, fathers, daughters, and sons: Gender differences in adults' intergenerational ties. *Journal of Family Issues*, 41(9), 1597–1625. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X19894369>
- Fischer, P. A., & Malmberg, G. (2001). Settled people don't move: On life course and (Im-)mobility in Sweden. *International Journal of Population Geography*, 7(5), 357–371. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijpg.230>
- Fors, S., & Lennartsson, C. (2008). Social mobility, geographical proximity and intergenerational family contact in Sweden. *Ageing and Society*, 28(2), 253–270. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X07006617>
- Gillespie, B. J., & Mulder, C. H. (2020). Nonresident family as a motive for migration. *Demographic Research*, 42, 399–410. <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2020.42.13>
- Glaser, K., & Tomassini, C. (2000). Proximity of older women to their children. *The Gerontologist*, 40(6), 729–737. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/40.6.729>
- Gromada, A., & Richardson, D. (2021). *Where do rich countries stand on childcare?* UNICEF Office of Research–Innocenti.
- Grundy, E., & Henretta, J. C. (2006). Between elderly parents and adult children: A new look at the intergenerational care provided by the “sandwich generation”. *Ageing and Society*, 26(5), 707–722. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X06004934>
- Ha, J. H., & Carr, D. (2005). The effect of parent–child geographic proximity on widowed parents' psychological adjustment and social integration. *Research on Aging*, 27(5), 578–610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0164027505277977>
- Ha, J. H., & Ingersoll-Dayton, B. (2008). The effect of widowhood on intergenerational ambivalence. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 63(1), S49–S58. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/63.1.S49>
- Hank, K. (2007). Proximity and contacts between older parents and their children: A European comparison. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69, 157–173. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2006.00351.x>
- Hank, K., & Buber, I. (2009). Grandparents caring for their grandchildren: Findings from the 2004 Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30(1), 53–73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X08322627>
- Hansen, E. B., & Gottschalk, G. (2006). What makes older people consider moving house and what makes them move? *Housing, Theory and Society*, 23(1), 34–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14036090600587521>
- Hjältn, A. (2012). “Because we know our limits”: Elderly parents' views on intergenerational proximity and intimacy. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 26(3), 296–308. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2012.01.005>
- Joseph, A. E., & Hallman, B. C. (1998). Over the hill and far away: Distance as a barrier to the provision of assistance to elderly relatives. *Social Science & Medicine*, 46(6), 631–639. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-9536\(97\)00181-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-9536(97)00181-0)
- Kalmijn, M. (2007). Gender differences in the effects of divorce, widowhood and remarriage on intergenerational support: Does marriage protect fathers? *Social Forces*, 85(3), 1079–1104. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2007.0043>
- Knijff, T. C., & Liefbroer, A. C. (2006). More kin than kind: Instrumental support in families. In P. A. Dykstra, M. Kalmijn, T. C. Knijff, A. Komter, A. C. Liefbroer, & C. H. Mulder (Eds.), *Family solidarity in the Netherlands* (pp. 89–105). Dutch University Press.
- Leopold, T., Raab, M., & Engelhardt, H. (2014). The transition to parent care: Costs, commitments, and caregiver selection among children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 76(2), 300–318. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12099>
- Liaw, K. L., Frey, W. H., & Lin, J. P. (2002). Location of adult children as an attraction for black and white elderly primary migrants in the United States. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 34(2), 191–216. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a34119>
- Litwak, E., & Szelenyi, I. (1969). Primary group structures and their functions: Kin, neighbors, and friends. *American Sociological Review*, 34(4), 465–481. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2091957>
- Litwak, E., & Kulis, S. (1987). Technology, proximity, and measures of kin support. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 49(3), 649–661. <https://doi.org/10.2307/352210>
- Lundholm, E. (2015). Migration and regional differences in access to local family networks among 60-year olds in Sweden. *Journal of Population Ageing*, 8(3), 173–185. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12062-015-9117-z>
- Lundholm, E., & Malmberg, G. (2009). Between elderly parents and grandchildren—Geographic proximity and trends in four-generation families. *Journal of Population Ageing*, 2(3–4), 121–137. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12062-010-9022-4>
- Mulder, C. H. (2018). Putting family centre stage: Ties to nonresident family, internal migration, and immobility. *Demographic Research*, 39(1), 1151–1180. <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2018.39.43>
- Mulder, C. H., & Billari, F. C. (2010). Homeownership regimes and low fertility. *Housing Studies*, 25(4), 527–541. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673031003711469>
- Mulder, C. H., & Wagner, M. (2012). Moving after separation: The role of location-specific capital. *Housing Studies*, 27(6), 839–852. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2012.651109>
- Mulder, C. H., & Malmberg, G. (2014). Local ties and family migration. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 46(9), 2195–2211. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a130160p>
- Niedomysl, T. (2008). Residential preferences for interregional migration in Sweden: Demographic, socioeconomic, and geographical determinants. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 40(5), 1109–1131. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a39177>
- Niedomysl, T., & Hansen, H. K. (2010). What matters more for the decision to move: Jobs versus amenities. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 42(7), 1636–1649. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a42432>
- Nowok, B., Van Ham, M., Findlay, A. M., & Gayle, V. (2013). Does migration make you happy? A longitudinal study of internal migration and subjective well-being. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 45(4), 986–1002. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a45287>
- OECD. (2020). LMF1.2. *Maternal employment rates*. https://www.oecd.org/els/family/LMF1_2_Maternal_Employment.pdf
- OECD. (2022). PF2.1. *Parental leave systems*. https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/PF2_1_Parental_leave_systems.pdf
- OECD. (2023). PF3.2. *Enrolment in childcare and pre-school*. https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/PF3_2_Enrolment_childcare_preschool.pdf
- Paternoster, R., Brame, R., Mazerolle, P., & Piquero, A. (1998). Using the correct statistical test for the equality of regression coefficients. *Criminology*, 36(4), 859–866. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.1998.tb01268.x>
- Pettersson, A., & Malmberg, G. (2009). Adult children and elderly parents as mobility attractions in Sweden. *Population, Space and Place*, 15(4), 343–357. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.558>
- Pope, N. D., & Kang, B. (2010). Residential relocation in later life: A comparison of proactive and reactive moves. *Journal of Housing for the Elderly*, 24(2), 193–207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02763891003757122>
- Puga, D. (2004). El comportamiento residencial de los mayores: Análisis biográfico de la movilidad en la vejez. *Reis*, 105, 79–102. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40184625>
- Rainer, H., & Siedler, T. (2012). Family location and caregiving patterns from an international perspective. *Population and Development Review*, 38(2), 337–351. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2012.00495.x>
- Reher, D. S. (1998). Family ties in Western Europe: Persistent contrasts. *Population and Development Review*, 24(2), 203–234. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2807972>

- Riley, L. D., & Bowen, C. (2005). The sandwich generation: Challenges and coping strategies of multigenerational families. *The Family Journal*, 13(1), 52–58. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1066480704270099>
- Roan, C. L., & Raley, R. K. (1996). Intergenerational coresidence and contact: A longitudinal analysis of adult children's response to their mother's widowhood. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58(3), 708–717. <https://doi.org/10.2307/353730>
- Schimmele, C. M., & Wu, Z. (2016). Repartnering after union dissolution in later life. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 78(4), 1013–1031. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12315>
- Silverstein, M., & Angelelli, J. J. (1998). Older parents' expectations of moving closer to their children. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 53(3), S153–S163. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/53B.3.S153>
- Smits, A. (2010). Moving close to parents and adult children in the Netherlands: The influence of support needs. *Demographic Research*, 22(11), 985–1014. <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2010.22.31>
- Smits, A., Van Gaalen, R. I., & Mulder, C. H. (2010). Parent-child coresidence: Who moves in with whom and for whose needs? *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(4), 1022–1033.
- Smits, J., Mulder, C. H., & Hooimeijer, P. (2003). Changing gender roles, shifting power balance and long-distance migration of couples. *Urban Studies*, 40(3), 603–613. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43084212>
- Sommers, D. G., & Rowell, K. R. (1992). Factors differentiating elderly residential movers and nonmovers: A longitudinal analysis. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 11, 249–262. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00124940>
- Spring, A., Ackert, E., Crowder, K., & South, S. J. (2017). Influence of proximity to kin on residential mobility and destination choice: Examining local movers in metropolitan areas. *Demography*, 54(4), 1277–1304. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-017-0587-x>
- Spring, A., Mulder, C. H., Thomas, M. J., & Cooke, T. J. (2021). Migration after union dissolution in the United States: The role of non-resident family. *Social Science Research*, 96, 102539. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2021.102539>
- Statistics Belgium (2019). DEMOBEL. https://statbel.fgov.be/sites/default/files/files/documents/bevolking/Demobel_EN.pdf
- Statistics Sweden (2016). LISA—Longitudinell integrationsdatabas för sjukförsäkrings- och arbetsmarknadsstudier. <https://www.scb.se/LISA/>
- Stillwell, J., Bell, M., Ueffing, P., Daras, K., Charles-Edwards, E., Kupiszewski, M., & Kupiszewska, D. (2016). Internal migration around the world: Comparing distance travelled and its frictional effect. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 48(8), 1657–1675. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X16643963>
- Stone, J., Berrington, A., & Falkingham, J. (2014). Gender, turning points, and boomerangs: Returning home in young adulthood in Great Britain. *Demography*, 51(1), 257–276. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-013-0247-8>
- Thomas, M. J., & Dommermuth, L. (2020). Internal migration and the role of intergenerational family ties and life events. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82(5), 1461–1478. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12678>
- Thuen, F., & Eikeland, O. J. (1998). Social support among males and females after marital disruption. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 3(3), 315–326. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13548509808400605>
- Van Diepen, A. M. L., & Mulder, C. H. (2009). Distance to family members and relocations of older adults. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 24(1), 31–46. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-008-9130-0>
- Vergauwen, J., & Mortelmans, D. (2020). Parental health, informal support, and geographic mobility between parents and adult children. *Population, Space and Place*, 26(2), e2301. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2301>
- Walters, W. H. (2002). Place characteristics and later-life migration. *Research on Aging*, 24(2), 243–277. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0164027502242004>
- Winke, T. (2017). Later life moves and movers in Germany: An expanded typology. *Comparative Population Studies*, 42, 3–24. <https://doi.org/10.12765/CPoS-2017-01>
- Wiseman, R. F. (1980). Why older people move: Theoretical issues. *Research on Aging*, 2(2), 141–154. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016402758022003>
- Wright, C. L., & Maxwell, J. W. (1991). Social support during adjustment to later-life divorce: How adult children help parents. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 15(3–4), 21–48. https://doi.org/10.1300/J087v15n03_02
- Zilincikova, Z., & Schnor, C. (2021). Who moves out and who keeps the home? Short-term and medium-term mobility consequences of grey divorce in Belgium. *Demographic Research*, 45(9), 291–328. <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2021.45.9>
- Zorlu, A., & Latten, J. (2009). Ethnic sorting in the Netherlands. *Urban Studies*, 46(9), 1899–1923. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098009106023>

How to cite this article: Zilincikova, Z., Linares, I. P., Artamonova, A., Brandén, M., & Schnor, C. (2023). Residential choice following separation and widowhood in middle and later life in Belgium and Sweden. *Population, Space and Place*, e2709. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2709>

APPENDIX A

See Tables A1–A5.

TABLE A1 Logistic regression models (Model 1) of migration to another municipality between 2012 and 2014 for men and women in Belgium and Sweden for sample of individuals with non-resident parent(s) and non-resident child(ren).

	Men, M1			Women, M1			Difference			
	Belgium		Sweden	Belgium		Sweden	Belgium		Sweden	
	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	BE-SE ^a	
Partnership transition										
Married (ref.)										
Separated	3.112***	-0.090	2.459***	-0.089	3.138***	-0.090	2.560***	-0.108	0.578***	
Widowed	0.963***	-0.218	1.187***	-0.184	1.001***	-0.151	1.085***	-0.137	-0.084	
Non-resident children										
Non-resident child not in the municipality (ref.)										
At least one non-resident child in municipality	-0.558***	-0.040	-0.756***	-0.039	-0.686***	-0.044	-0.903***	-0.041	0.217**	
Parent(s) in a different municipality (ref.)										
Parent(s) in the same municipality	-0.619***	-0.041	-0.590***	-0.046	-0.692***	-0.046	-0.733***	-0.053	0.041	
Age										
Age squared	-0.189*	-0.078	0.039	-0.065	0.103	-0.094	0.0136	-0.068	0.089	
Age squared	0.002*	-0.001	-0.0005	-0.001	-0.00102	-0.001	-0.00027	-0.001	-0.0008	
Education										
Lower secondary (ref.)										
Higher secondary, Post(secondary)	-0.164**	-0.055	0.085	-0.044	-0.167**	-0.051	-0.0607	-0.049	-0.106	
Tertiary	-0.247***	-0.058	0.183***	-0.054	-0.337***	-0.062	0.0228	-0.053	-0.360***	
Missing	0.142	-0.086	0.070	-0.431	-0.0323	-0.105	0.144	-0.548	-0.176	
Living in the same municipality as 2002										
No (ref.)										
Yes	-1.207***	-0.049	-0.972***	-0.039	-1.192***	-0.049	-0.924***	-0.043	-0.268***	
Resident children										
No resident children (ref.)										
Only adult resident children	-0.0543	-0.065	-0.158*	-0.074	-0.0125	-0.118	-0.069	-0.080	0.057	
At least one minor resident child	-0.264***	-0.039	-0.186***	-0.037	-0.193***	-0.042	-0.280***	-0.038	0.087	
Degree of urbanisation										
Urban (ref.)										
Suburban	-0.168**	-0.055	0.126	-0.087	-0.224***	-0.056	0.164	-0.088	-0.388**	
Rural	-0.299***	-0.061	0.061	-0.094	-0.302***	-0.058	0.123	-0.091	-0.425***	

(Continues)

TABLE A1 (Continued)

	Men, M1			Women, M1						
	Belgium		Sweden	Belgium		Sweden				
	B	SE(B)	B	B	SE(B)	B				
Standardised values of proportion 65+	-0.0133	-0.029	-0.239***	-0.028	0.226***	-0.0185	-0.022	-0.232***	-0.027	0.214***
Standardised values of size of municipality	0.127***	-0.015	-0.011	-0.031	0.138***	0.109***	-0.016	0.0231	-0.031	0.086*
Constant	3.618	-2.262	-3.188	-1.930	6.806*	-4.619	-2.697	-2.216	-2.019	-2.403
No. of observations	170,631		188,534			174,687		205,488		

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

*Significance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

TABLE A2 Logistic regression models (Model 2) of migration to another municipality with interaction effects between 2012 and 2014 for men and women in Belgium and Sweden for sample of individuals with non-resident parent(s) and non-resident child(ren).

	Men, M2			Women, M2						
	Belgium		Sweden	Belgium		Sweden				
	B	SE(B)	B	B	SE(B)	B				
Partnership transition										
Married (ref.)										
Separated	3.132***	-0.099	2.482***	-0.105	0.650***	3.298***	-0.099	2.544***	-0.127	0.754***
Widowed	1.134***	-0.291	1.233***	-0.247	-0.099	1.197***	-0.191	1.435***	-0.19	-0.238
Non-resident children										
Non-resident child not in the municipality (ref.)										
At least one non-resident child in municipality	-0.579***	-0.042	-0.765***	-0.043	0.186**	-0.689***	-0.046	-0.892***	-0.042	0.203**
Non-resident parents										
Parent(s) in a different municipality (ref.)										
Parent(s) in the same municipality	-0.586***	-0.045	-0.572***	-0.047	-0.014	-0.638***	-0.047	-0.731***	-0.056	0.093
Interaction terms										
At least one non-resident child in municipality # separated	0.299*	-0.145	0.235	-0.179	0.064	0.029	-0.158	0.038	-0.173	-0.008
At least one non-resident child in municipality # widowed	-0.694	-0.580	-0.135	-0.391	-0.559	0.098	-0.311	-0.910**	-0.288	1.008*

TABLE A2 (Continued)

	Men, M2				Women, M2				
	Belgium		Sweden		Belgium		Sweden		
	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	
									Difference BE-SE ^a
Parent(s) in the same municipality # separated	-0.378*	-0.162	-0.380*	-0.172	-0.586***	-0.164	-0.001	-0.179	-0.585*
Parent(s) in the same municipality # widowed	-0.003	-0.493	0.066	-0.415	-0.862*	-0.354	-0.136	-0.317	-0.726
Age	-0.188*	-0.078	0.036	-0.065	0.106	-0.095	0.014	-0.068	0.092
Age squared	0.002*	-0.001	-0.000	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001	-0.000	-0.001	-0.001
Education									
Lower secondary (ref.)									
Higher secondary, Post(secondary)	-0.164**	-0.055	0.085	-0.044	-0.168**	-0.051	-0.060	-0.049	-0.108
Tertiary	-0.246***	-0.058	0.184***	-0.055	-0.337***	-0.062	0.024	-0.053	-0.361***
Missing	0.142	-0.086	0.070	-0.431	-0.032	-0.106	0.145	-0.554	-0.178
Living in the same municipality as 2002									
No (ref.)									
Yes	-1.210***	-0.049	-0.972***	-0.039	-1.197***	-0.049	-0.925***	-0.043	-0.272***
Resident children									
No resident children (ref.)									
Only adult resident children	-0.054	-0.065	-0.158*	-0.074	-0.023	-0.12	-0.068	-0.080	0.045
At least one minor resident child	-0.264***	-0.039	-0.187***	-0.037	-0.192***	-0.042	-0.279***	-0.038	0.087
Degree of urbanisation									
Urban (ref.)									
Suburban	-0.167**	-0.055	0.127	-0.087	-0.226***	-0.057	0.163	-0.088	-0.389**
Rural	-0.298***	-0.061	0.062	-0.094	-0.304***	-0.058	0.123	-0.091	-0.427***
Standardised values of proportion 65+	-0.013	-0.029	-0.240***	-0.028	-0.019	-0.024	-0.233***	-0.027	0.214***
Standardised values of size of municipality	0.127***	-0.015	-0.011	-0.031	0.110***	-0.016	0.023	-0.031	0.087*
Constant	3.607	-2.265	-3.115	-1.933	-4.694	-2.72	-2.228	-2.011	-2.466
No. of observations	170,631		188,534		174,687		205,488		

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.^aSignificance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

TABLE A3 Conditional logit models (Model 3) of municipality choice among movers for men and women in Belgium and Sweden for sample of individuals with non-resident parent(s) and non-resident child(ren).

	Men, M3				Women, M3					
	Belgium		Sweden		Belgium		Sweden			
	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)		
									Difference	BE-SE ^a
Presence of family	1.795***	-0.071	1.911***	-0.071	1.930***	-0.074	2.371***	-0.0659	-0.441***	-0.441***
Child in the municipality	1.963***	-0.056	2.399***	-0.0516	2.382***	-0.056	2.849***	-0.0484	-0.467***	-0.467***
Standardised values of municipality size	0.218***	-0.01	0.201***	-0.0123	0.180***	-0.011	0.169***	-0.0124	0.011	0.011
Standardised values of proportion 65+ in the municipality	0.648***	-0.018	0.209***	-0.0257	0.634***	-0.018	0.257***	-0.0255	0.377***	0.377***
Logged distance to the municipality	-2.149***	-0.024	-1.599***	-0.0213	-2.013***	-0.025	-1.515***	-0.0204	-0.498***	-0.498***
Degree of urbanisation										
Urban municipality (ref.)										
Suburban municipality	0.154**	-0.051	-0.403***	-0.0681	0.222***	-0.054	-0.379***	-0.0678	0.601***	0.601***
Rural municipality	0.325***	-0.059	-0.557***	-0.0781	0.451***	-0.062	-0.496***	-0.0772	0.947***	0.947***
No. of movers	3768		4191		3446		4427			
No. of observations (person-municipality)	222,312		121,539		203,314		128,383			

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

^aSignificance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

TABLE A4 Conditional logit models (Model 4) of municipality choice among movers with interaction effects for men and women in Belgium and Sweden for sample of individuals with non-resident parent(s) and non-resident child(ren).

	Men, M4			Women, M4			Difference		
	Belgium		Sweden	Belgium		Sweden	BE-SE ^a		
	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	B	SE(B)	
Presence of family									
Parent in the municipality	1.607***	-0.08	1.818***	-0.0757	1.594***	-0.085	2.314***	-0.069	-0.720***
Child in the municipality	2.033***	-0.059	2.437***	-0.0528	2.352***	-0.059	2.838***	-0.0497	-0.486***
Interaction terms									
Married # parent in the municipality (ref.)									
Separated # parent in the municipality	1.045***	-0.176	0.997***	-0.227	1.778***	-0.18	0.227	-0.26	1.551***
Widowed # parent in the municipality	2.015*	-0.863	0.118	-0.688	0.278	-0.676	2.618***	-0.497	-2.34*
Married # child in the municipality (ref.)									
Separated # child in the municipality	-0.688***	-0.168	-0.933***	-0.221	0.202	-0.169	-0.032	-0.191	0.2341
Widowed # child in the municipality	2.546***	-0.571	0.742	-0.453	1.293**	-0.407	1.179**	-0.364	0.114
Standardised values of municipality size	0.219***	-0.01	0.202***	-0.0124	0.184***	-0.011	0.170***	-0.0124	0.014
Standardised values of proportion 65+ in the municipality	0.649***	-0.018	0.209***	-0.0257	0.637***	-0.018	0.257***	-0.0255	0.380***
Logged distance to the municipality	-2.153***	-0.024	-1.599***	-0.0214	-2.015***	-0.025	-1.517***	-0.0205	-0.498***
Degree of urbanisation									
Urban municipality (ref.)									
Suburban municipality	0.161**	-0.052	-0.406***	-0.0682	0.233***	-0.055	-0.375***	-0.0679	0.608***
Rural municipality	0.332***	-0.059	-0.557***	-0.0781	0.462***	-0.062	-0.489***	-0.0773	0.951***
No. of movers	3768		4191		3446		4427		
No. of observations (person-municipality)	222,312		121,539		203,314		128,383		

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

^aSignificance of the differences between the years is tested with t tests for independent samples.

TABLE A5 Average marginal effects of the logistic regression models (Model 1) of migration between two municipalities between 2012 and 2014 for men and women in Belgium and Sweden.

		Men, Model 1		Women, Model 1	
		Belgium	Sweden	Belgium	Sweden
		AME and SE	AME and SE	AME and SE	AME and SE
Partnership transition	Married (ref.)				
	Separated	0.259***	0.146***	0.239***	0.156***
		-0.0107	-0.00897	-0.0111	-0.0116
	Widowed	0.0272***	0.0360***	0.0294***	0.0465***
		-0.00363	-0.00552	-0.0027	-0.00402
Non-resident children	Non-resident children not in municipality (ref.)				
	No non-resident children	-0.00974***	-0.0158***	-0.00943***	-0.0161***
		-0.000501	-0.000736	-0.000559	-0.000765
	At least one non-resident child in municipality	-0.0148***	-0.0209***	-0.0150***	-0.0234***
		-0.000461	-0.000621	-0.000465	-0.00065
Non-resident parents	Parent(s) in a different municipality (ref.)				
	No parents	-0.00361***	-0.00399***	-0.00390***	-0.00451***
		-0.000529	-0.000593	-0.00053	-0.000523
	Parent(s) in the same municipality	-0.00953***	-0.0118***	-0.00967***	-0.0132***
		-0.000582	-0.000744	-0.000574	-0.000813
Age		0.00259***	0.00186*	0.00379***	0.00426***
		-0.000621	-0.000806	-0.000668	-0.000941
Age squared		-0.0000240***	-0.0000175**	-0.0000347***	-0.0000384***
		-5.18E-06	-0.0000067	-0.00000559	-0.00000782
Education	Lower secondary (ref.)				
	Higher secondary, Post(secondary)	-0.00162**	0.00116*	-0.000554	0.000969
		-0.000534	-0.000476	-0.00047	-0.000623
	Tertiary	-0.00218***	0.00446***	-0.00249***	0.00244***
		-0.00062	-0.000809	-0.00054	-0.000732
Missing		0.00427***	0.00821*	0.00454***	0.00724*
		-0.000829	-0.00375	-0.00102	-0.00361
Living in the same municipality as 2002	No (ref.)				
	Yes	-0.0360***	-0.0319***	-0.0362***	-0.0308***
		-0.00107	-0.00104	-0.00107	-0.00096
Resident children	No resident children (ref.)				
	Only adult resident children	0.000301	-0.00519***	-0.00218*	-0.00478***
		-0.000739	-0.000896	-0.000918	-0.00107
	At least one minor resident child	-0.00394***	-0.00379***	-0.00309***	-0.00478***
		-0.000531	-0.000631	-0.000469	-0.000552

TABLE A5 (Continued)

		Men, Model 1		Women, Model 1	
		Belgium	Sweden	Belgium	Sweden
		AME and SE	AME and SE	AME and SE	AME and SE
Degree of urbanisation	Urban (ref.)				
	Suburban	-0.00624***	0.00362*	-0.00462***	0.00315*
		-0.00101	-0.00156	-0.000942	-0.0015
	Rural	-0.00909***	0.00381*	-0.00727***	0.00355*
		-0.00102	-0.00169	-0.000943	-0.00163
Standardised values of proportion 65+		-0.00155*	-0.00494***	-0.00123*	-0.00466***
		-0.000642	-0.000539	-0.000547	-0.000505
Standardised values of size of municipality		0.00023	0.0000859	0.000686***	0.000373
Constant		-0.000235	-0.000752	-0.000202	-0.000651
No. of observations		816,917	615,539	777,201	604,100