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Individualization and Family Solidarity

Gerardo Meil

Welfare Projects
"la Caixa" Foundation

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Presentation

The family is the main setting for our development as individuals. It is where we acquire community values and learn to give and receive love. Throughout our lives the family is a stable framework of reference, where we turn for support when needed and where we provide care and support to others.

But the family – this important framework of relationships – has undergone a major transformation in recent decades, the result, among other factors, of demographic and social changes. For example, due to the increase in life expectancy, the number of families in which three or even four generations now live side-by-side is growing.

At the same time, the decline in the birth-rate means that many families have fewer children. This decreased birth-rate is in part due to the massive incorporation of women into the labour market, which has also generated new needs for caregiving within the family. Along with these transformations new types of families have appeared, the result of the changes taking place in people's lives. Lastly, we cannot forget the changes in values which underlie many of these transformations. Thus, we are seeing a gradual disappearance of patriarchal and authoritarian values and the rise of more egalitarian, *negotiating* families.

In the face of such change, we must ask if families continue to fulfill their traditional functions and maintain the importance they had in the past. Do individuals trust in the family as their primary source of support? Or, on the contrary, are we seeing a gradual dissolution of family values and their substitution with more individualistic values? When do we turn to the family for support and when do we turn to friends or institutions?

This study provides answers to these and other questions, providing food for thought in three different areas.

First, it analyses whether family values, fundamental in Mediterranean societies such as Spain, maintain their traditional importance. Secondly, it examines flows of support and solidarity among the different generations within the family. This support can consist of providing services (for example, caregiving) or can be in the form of monetary or material transfers. Thirdly, the study examines the extent to which the family contributes to the individual well-being of its members, also identifying the main conflicts that can appear within families. With each of these areas, data regarding the specific situation in Spain are presented in a comparative context with other European countries.

With the addition of this study to the Social Studies collection, the "la Caixa" Foundation seeks to stimulate debate on the present and future of the family. With concrete analysis of the state of the family, such as that provided by this study, it will be possible to better evaluate the needs of the family and design educational and social policy with greater rigour in order to provide care for those who need it. It will also be possible to better assess the challenges that the transformation of the family pose for the welfare state and its sustainability.

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Barcelona, September 2011

Introduction

The structure and dynamics of family life in Spain have not been immune to the profound changes that have taken place in Spanish society and in all developed countries in recent decades (Alberdi, Flaquer and Iglesias de Ussel, 1994; Alberdi, 1999; Meil, 1999). As in other Western countries, there have been profound changes in the social control exerted on family behaviour in recent decades. On the one hand, there has been a decrease in social control over multiple dimensions of family life that were traditionally subject to deeply entrenched normative models; on the other hand, social control over power dynamics within the heart of family life has increased, placing individual rights above those of institutions (in particular the rights of the weakest members of the society). This change can be seen in legislation as well as in attitudes and behaviours.

This change in social control exerted on family life in Western countries has given rise to greater individual freedom in carrying out life projects and in the ways couples and families understand and organize their lives. In other words, family projects and lifestyles have been privatized, and traditional models of family organization are no longer binding. The forms of entering, being part of and departing from family life have become more flexible. Those that remain depend on negotiation and agreement among the individuals involved. More precisely, social disapproval of forms that deviate from the models of the past is no longer acceptable.

Thus, marriage is no longer necessary for a couple to begin a life project together; living together without being married is no longer stigmatized. Women and couples can decide freely if and when to have children,

although this freedom is conditioned by "new" social norms that stigmatize teenage motherhood or having children without sufficient resources to provide them with a minimum level of well-being. The responsibility that comes with the decision to have children, in any case, is independent of the parents' marital status. If one partner or both do not want to continue living together or do not want to remain married, it is legally and socially acceptable to separate requiring nothing other than the desire to do so. The loss of social control over family life and the increase in individual autonomy in defining it is most clearly seen in the social and legal acceptance of same-sex couples and the legal recognition of their capacity to assume the care and custody of children (although to different degrees depending on countries). Despite the fact that same sex couples may suffer social discrimination depending on the circumstances, contexts and laws of the countries where they reside (for example, prohibitions to marry or adopt), they are increasingly accepted in society, based on the right of individuals to choose their lifestyles and relationships.

This process of transformation of social control and the corresponding gain in individual autonomy in terms of individual life projects has been synthesized by Ulrich Beck (1986) in his concept of individualization. With this concept Beck intended to highlight the greater role in today's culture of individual choices and decisions in comparison to social norms in areas such as profession, politics and family life. Individualization means "the growing autonomy of individual biographies from the structures that in the past guided the appearance of specific milestones and transitions in life such as marriage, the birth of the first child, the beginning of one's work biography, etc.; structures that were fundamentally constituted by sex, age, and social or regional origin" (Peuckert, 1996:252). Instead of the "normal" or standard biography, a "chosen biography" emerges that, on the one hand, means a greater capacity to make choices regarding basic life decisions, but on the other hand, implies greater uncertainty and the loss of security with respect to the validity of traditional social norms and institutions (Beck, 1986: 206).

Individualization in regard to the transformation of the family not only means the loss of traditional social control over the family life of individuals, but it also means that life projects – and in particular those of

women – have been profoundly transformed, with the rights and aspirations of individuals now playing a preeminent role in defining them. Thus, the aspirations of women in society today are no longer exclusively defined in the family arena and oriented towards service to other family members, but include their right to have their own careers, to have their own lives (Beck-Gernsheim, 1998).

Individualization – understood as the loss of social control over family projects and the gaining of individual autonomy in designing these projects – is the social process behind the most important changes that have taken place in family life, namely:

1. Changes in the social role of women: Their role is no longer defined primarily in terms of domestic and family roles (such as housewife, mother and caregiver for dependent family members) but now includes all spheres of social life and, in particular, paid employment. From the traditional family model characterized by a strict division of roles based on age and sex and in which the man was responsible for being the *breadwinner*, we have now moved to a model in which both members of the couple share the responsibility for earning a living outside the home, as well as for the quality of life in the home.
2. The emergence of family planning as a norm to guide decisions on having children: The emergence of this social norm implies that a couple's sex life is no longer primarily oriented towards reproduction. Children are no longer simply a consequence of having sex; individuals practice contraception and consciously decide based on their living situation when to have children and how many they can raise, according to norms of "responsible parenting". Sexuality, procreation and marriage – traditionally aspects of one single social reality, the family (especially in the case of women) – have come to be realities that are not so strictly connected so that sexual practice does not have to be linked to marriage. With this change women have acquired control over their sexuality and over the decision to have children. The spread of the norms of responsible parenting and family planning along with the increasing difficulty of attaining the conditions (especially material conditions) required to have children – having an "adequate" home, a "secure" job, and "enough" income (the definitions of these becoming

more and more restricted) – has led to a decrease in fertility. From the point of view of the family, this has meant a reduction in family size – smaller families becoming commonplace – and an increase in the number of individuals and couples without children.

3. The disappearance of the patriarchal family and the emergence of the negotiating family: The change in women's social roles, their incorporation into the labour market and their control over their sexuality and the decision to have children, among other social and cultural changes, have undermined the patriarchal family, giving women the social resources to question its validity. The empowerment of women has led to negotiation (more implicit than explicit) among couples over the terms of living together, the degree of individual autonomy within the context of common life projects and each partner's responsibilities, giving rise to a new type of family – the negotiating family. Increasingly, there are more and more aspects of living together that must be "discussed" because they are no longer taken for granted. No longer are there universally accepted, clearly defined models on how family life must be, not in the couple's relationship or between generations.
4. Pluralisation of the forms of family life and the emergence of new types of families: As a result of the increase in individual autonomy in defining family life projects, forms of living together that in the past were in the minority have become more widespread, and new types of families have appeared. Families formed by a couple with children living together (the nuclear family) are becoming less frequent, while other forms of co-residence are on the increase.

And what are the effects of individualization on family solidarity?

Neither Beck nor Beck-Gernsheim or their collaborators have analysed the possible effects of individualization on the patterns of family solidarity. However, implicit in their thesis is that traditional family solidarity has eroded as a result of less social control on family behaviours, greater marital conflict and the professional aspirations of women. Thus, according to their thesis, the increased vulnerability of married couples will translate into greater marital strife and more widespread divorce

(Beck, 1986: 176, 184 and ff, 190, 197), as well as into an increase in second or successive marriages or partnerships, which will negatively affect the family network by introducing confusion and uncertainty. On the other hand, women's professional aspirations will bring an end to their primary role in the family social network and in the organization of mutual support, as they are no longer defined as the sole caregivers within the family and no longer have the time available, thus leading to the weakening of family ties.

Stated in more general terms, greater individual freedom stemming from less social control over life projects will lead to a decreased capacity to provide support and the decreased reliability of social networks and, therefore, a greater reliance on institutions. From a totally different perspective (but leading to the same diagnosis), there is the well-known theory of the structural isolation of the nuclear family and the loss of the family network's function of social protection as a consequence of the emergence of industrial society, formulated by Parsons (1943) and Burgess and Locke (1945), which has sparked great debate (Litwak, 1960; Sussman and Burchinal, 1962; Pitrou, 1978; Litwak and Kulis, 1987, among others). In this case, however, it was the individual who became structurally isolated from the kinship network, not the nuclear family.

From another perspective, the thesis of Popenoe (1993) on the decline in family values and the American family (and by extension, the Western nuclear family) is along the same lines. The central thesis of this author is that the family has lost functions, power and authority, and that familism as a cultural value is eroding due to individuals being less willing to invest time, money and energy in family life because they prefer to invest more in themselves. The corollary to this is that family solidarity is also eroding.

This focus on the decline in the importance of family and intergenerational solidarity has been questioned by many authors. Their work has provided evidence that intergenerational relationships during adult life and in old-age continue to be strong and comprise a very important resource for the well-being of the elderly (Bengtson and Achenbaum, 1993; Attias-Donfut, 1995; Nave-Herz, 2002; Motel-Klingebiel *et al*., 2003, among many others). In fact, one of the articles by Bengston (2001) – one of the most important authors in this field – is entitled *Beyond the Nuclear Family: the*

Increasing Importance of Multigenerational Bonds. The strength of multigenerational bonds has been pointed out not only in the United States but also in other Western countries such as Switzerland (Kellerhals *et al*., 1994), Belgium (Bawin-Legros and Jacobs, 1995), France (Attias-Donfut, 1995) and Germany (Bien, 1994; Kohli, 1999; Szydlik 2000; Nave-Herz, 2002). In Spain there are also studies which show the importance of intergenerational support (Meil, 2002; *Instituto de Estadistica de Andalucia*, 2007), above all, in regard to the care of elderly dependent persons (Perez Ortiz, 2003; Agullo, 2002; Rodriguez, Mateo and Sancho, 2005, among many others) as well as children (Tobio *et al*. 2010; Mari-Klose *et al*. 2010, among others). Kohli, Hank and Kunemund (2009) summarized the findings of this research in the following points:

1. Emancipated children and their parents live close to each other (although in the majority of cases not in the same house), feel emotionally close, have frequent contact, and support each other by providing different types of help.
2. Financial and other types of support continue to be common and important. The direction of intergenerational support flows tends to be downward, that is, from parents to children.
3. Financial support is supplemented by inheritances. While financial support is usually for children who have economic problems, inheritances are distributed equally among all children.

However, if the loss of social control over family life projects and the increase in individual autonomy in designing these projects have contributed to the demise of the patriarchal family model, how have patterns of family solidarity been affected by the spread of paid work for women, the increase in divorce and the emergence of the negotiating family? If the process of individualization has produced such profound changes in family dynamics as those indicated, is it possible that this process has not caused changes in the norms and practices of family solidarity?

There is a widespread perception in the social sciences as well as in the broader society (not without some ambiguity) that family solidarity in Spain, as in all of the Mediterranean countries, is high. The supposed

greater importance of family solidarity in the Mediterranean countries of Europe, among them Spain, is explained by the characteristics of the familist welfare regime of these countries. According to the typology of social policies popularized by Esping-Andersen (2000), who analysed social welfare based on the different roles carried out by the state, the market and the family in the provision of individual welfare, there are three different models of welfare regimes, namely: the liberal model, the social democratic model and the conservative model.

The liberal model is characterized by the central role of the market in the provision of welfare, while the state and the family play marginal roles. The form of solidarity that is dominant in this model is individual in character, and the predominant place of solidarity is the market. The clearest example of this type of regime is the United States. In the social democratic welfare regime, the family and the market occupy a marginal place, while the state plays the main role in providing universal services that allow dependent family care services to be externalized, making state solidarity predominant. The country that most characterizes this model is Sweden. The third model is the conservative regime. Here the role of the family in the provision of welfare is central, while the market plays a marginal role and the state a subsidiary role; family solidarity is predominant in this model. The countries which most clearly represent this model are Germany and Italy (Esping-Andersen, 2000: 115).

Many authors have suggested the inclusion of a fourth model, the Mediterranean regime, which is close to the conservative model but with some differences. In this model the role of the family is greater and the role of the state is less than in the conservative model. Esping-Andersen, however, does not think there are sufficient reasons to justify a fourth model (2000: 92 and ff.). In the conservative model, but above all in the Mediterranean model, the lack of sufficient social services to relieve women of their family caregiving obligations, as well as the high costs of these services on the market, has meant that women have had to continue assuming these obligations. Therefore, family solidarity occupies a very important place in providing for individual welfare.

Following this line of argument, one would have to conclude, therefore, that family solidarity in these countries has not been substantially affected

by the process of individualization because neither the market nor the state make the defamilization of care services possible.

Implicit in Esping-Andersen's approach is the thesis that family solidarity is weakened by the development of the welfare state, a process known as "defamilization". This process arises as the state provides resources for the integration of women into the labour force and for dependent care outside the family. This favours older generations being able to live independently. This process will also result in the *crowding out* (Kunemund and Rein, 1999) of family solidarity, meaning family members not providing each other the same level of financial and other types of support as in the past.

However, the work of Kohli and collaborators, as well as the literature mentioned previously on the importance of intergenerational transfers, have questioned this thesis. State welfare services and benefits provided to individuals through transfers of money or through services do not have the effect of substituting for the support of family; rather they make it possible for family solidarity to work. The structure of intergenerational transfers demonstrates that in addition to being important, the direction of the flow of support is predominantly from parents to adult children. This is the case for all age groups and in all European countries (Attias-Donfut, 1995; Szydlik, 2000; Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007). Moreover, these transfers are more frequent in countries with social democratic welfare regimes but not as intense as in Mediterranean countries. In Mediterranean countries transfers are less frequent when the recipients of the support do not co-reside with the provider; however, when they are provided, they are more intense in terms of both money and time. The countries with a conservative welfare regime are in an intermediate situation (Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007). These differences are surely related to the resources parents have available to help their children (Kunemund and Rein, 1999; Attias-Donfut, 2005). According to Reher (1998), the centrality of the family and family solidarity in southern Europe compared to northern Europe dates from long before the emergence of the welfare state, even preceding the Industrial Revolution. Therefore, *crowding out* is not the issue; the thesis that the welfare state has eroded family solidarity is then just one more of the myths about modern society (Kohli, Kunemund and Vogel, 2008).

Beyond the issues of whether the type of welfare regime can explain the intensity of family solidarity, or if the increasing role of the welfare state in providing care weakens family solidarity, the data from a considerable number of comparative studies do not always support the image of "strong families" (Reher, 1998) in Spain versus "weak families" in more developed countries (*i.e.* more individualized countries).

Objectives of the research

The main objectives of the research whose results we present here are to demonstrate the scope and the characteristics of family solidarity in Spain (and in comparison with other countries, to the extent data is available) and to analyse the effects of individualization on the dynamics of family solidarity. In doing this analysis we have focused not only on multigenerational relationships, which is customary in the literature, but we have also taken into account the role of other relatives and friends.

In terms of the first objective, we want to respond to the following questions: What is the scope of family solidarity in Spain, and what forms does it take? What are its structural characteristics, and how does family solidarity in Spain differ from that in other countries?

For the second objective, we want to answer the following questions: Has mutual support among family members weakened? Or, has the process of individualization produced such profound changes in family dynamics as indicated? Is it possible that there have not been changes in the patterns of family solidarity?

Although there is not enough information to do a comparative analysis over time, there is sufficient information to address these questions. The term "family solidarity" refers to the norms and practices of mutual support among members of the family. Authors such as Bengston and Roberts (1991) demonstrated six different dimensions in the relationships between parents and adult children, namely: Associational, affectual, consensual, functional, normative and structural.

"Normative solidarity" refers to the strength of family members' commitment to assuming roles and fulfilling obligations within the family.

This dimension is, therefore, related to the degree to which family members identify with certain norms of family solidarity. It does not refer to the validity of these norms in specific cases (that is, in individuals' relationships with their children, parents, grandchildren, siblings, etc.) but to the validity of these norms in an abstract sense, as maxims of behaviour within the family.

"Structural solidarity" is understood as the structure of opportunities to produce family relationships based on the number, type and geographic proximity of the members. Having family per se and where they are located is not a demonstration of solidarity in a strict sense; however, having family or not, or the distance from family do influence the opportunities for contact and the exchange of support. Thus the situation is different for a person that has no children or siblings than for a person that is integrated into a more or less extensive family network. The aspects referred to in this dimension refer to the potential for solidarity rather than to a specific type of solidarity.

"Associative solidarity" refers to the frequency and patterns of interaction in different types of activities in which family members participate. This includes contact through visits, phone calls or by mail among family members, as well as doing things together such as going to the cinema or other types of events, going for walks, playing sports, celebrations, etc. Social relations are maintained by repetition of interactions over time, and the same is true in family life.

"Affectual solidarity" is understood as the type and degree of positive feelings among family members; these include feelings of affection, understanding, recognition, trust, respect, belonging, etc., among family members. This dimension of solidarity refers to the subjective dimension of relationships and the bonds that are created through the feeling of belonging to a group, forming part of "our" family, which generates identity and emotional bonds.

"Functional solidarity" refers to the degree to which exchanges of support and resources occur among family members without the recipient giving something back in exchange, even though there is an expectation of reciprocity in the future. The kinds of support and resources can include

services that require time and effort (*e.g.* help with domestic tasks, childcare, household repairs) or also transfers of money or valuables (*e.g.* gifts, loans of money or goods). Providing support or resources can be occasional or periodic; how often depends on the circumstances. This dimension is the one most commonly identified with family solidarity. Along with these exchanges of support and resources, some authors include family members of different generations or other adult family members living in the same home as a form of functional solidarity (Szydlik, 2000; Albertini, Kohli, Vogel, 2007).

Finally, the dimension of "consensual solidarity" refers to the sharing of values, attitudes, and opinions among family members. These values, attitudes and opinions do not refer to obligations of mutual support (which corresponds to the dimension of normative solidarity) but to agreement in evaluating the political, economic, social and cultural reality. Considering this dimension of family life as a manifestation of family solidarity has been called into question by numerous authors (Syzdlik, 2000), given that differences of opinions and attitudes regarding social issues does not necessarily mean the existence of less solidarity.

To respond to the questions we posit above, we analyse each of the dimensions except consensual solidarity because we believe that the community of ideas and values among members of the family network does not constitute a dimension of family solidarity. This strategy is common in the studies that have been carried out in other countries on this issue and that have been mentioned above.

Hypotheses

Our hypotheses are the following:

Hypothesis 1 on normative solidarity: If individualization has transformed social control over family life projects in the terms pointed out above and the questioning of models inherited from the past, then traditional norms of family solidarity will have changed. Individualization has not led to the disappearance of family as a life project for the vast majority of people, but it has changed the model and forms of family life. It is also not correct

to assume that individualization leads to the end of norms and practices of family solidarity; rather it has led to their redefinition. Therefore, the hypothesis we formulate is that individualization has meant, on the one hand, that the responsibility to provide support to guarantee the welfare of individuals has expanded beyond the family to now include other spheres of society (specifically the state and the market); as a result, family solidarity has come to be seen as a secondary or last resort rather than a first resort. In other words, in terms of social norms, individual family members' needs for care that is not just sporadic must be met with resources provided by government or the market (*e.g.* childcare facilities, summer camps, nursing homes, home assistance, etc.) and not only through help from family members.

In addition, if the process of individualization also implies the recognition of the right of women to have their own independent life goals – which are not family-oriented – as well as for men and women to have equal opportunities, rights and obligations, the norms regarding which gender should provide certain types of support should move toward equal obligations for both sexes. Thus, for example, norms about who should take care of dependent family members would have to be de-feminized. This hypothesis will be looked at in chapter one.

Hypothesis 2 on structural solidarity: Individualization has led to, as was pointed out above, the emergence of the norm of family planning, and this has resulted in a decrease in the birth-rate, which means smaller families. At the same time, improving living conditions have increased life expectancy. This has led to a profound change in the number and age composition of the members of the family network. This consequence of individualization is not a hypothesis but a widely demonstrated fact, so it has not been analysed. However, in chapter 2 we do show how this process manifests, focusing on the composition of kinship networks, given that normally this is only analysed from the perspective of household size or from a demographic perspective focused on declining fertility and the ageing of the population.

Structural solidarity also refers to geographic proximity between family members. Because individualization has led to an increase in individual autonomy, one might expect that this would result in the systematic

decrease of households with three generations co-residing, as well as a decrease in parents and their adult children co-residing due to young people leaving home at an earlier age. It has been widely documented and is well-known that this hypothesis is only partially fulfilled; although the elderly tend to live alone as long as they can, there are still a significant number who live with their adult children. In addition, the age of emancipation of young people from their parents' home is high. For this reason, this hypothesis is only briefly treated in chapter 2. However, in relation to geographic proximity not only are patterns of co-residence important, but the geographical distance between members of the family network is also important. Due to the greater emphasis placed on individual autonomy as well as reduced numbers of children, the probability of not having adult children living nearby would seem likely to increase. In this regard, the assumption is that individualization leads to members of the family network living further away from each other. However, migratory patterns are influenced not only by family roots (the result of family and cultural identity) but also by the economic situation and employment opportunities, as well as the dynamics of the housing market. As a result, it is difficult to posit the possible effects of individualization and assume that it is associated with generations living further apart. In any case, it is important to know if there is a trend towards the members of the family network living further apart, as the distance between them decisively influences the relational and functional dimensions of family solidarity. This is analysed in chapter 2.

Hypothesis 3 on relational solidarity: The process of individualization is also, as noted, behind the emergence of the "negotiating family". The negotiating family implies that the individuals who make up the nuclear family (*i.e.* spouses and children, if any) "negotiate" the terms of co-residence and the degree of family members' individual autonomy. In the area of kinship relationships this would presumably involve a weakening of institutionally-based family ties (*i.e.* I have to visit a member of my family because he/she is my mother/sibling/child, etc., in other words, because of family ties) and a strengthening of the dimension of choice in relationships. In other words, relationships of affinity would acquire increasing importance in individuals' social relations. With increasing

individualization, friends and relatives to whom we feel closer emotionally – who we would consider more as friends than as relatives – become the central core of our social network. If this hypothesis is correct, relationships and contacts through visits, phone calls, etc. would not necessarily decrease if emotional closeness were high, but would depend on this emotional closeness. Whether a person has more or less contact with more distant relatives (*e.g.* cousins or aunts and uncles) as a function of emotional closeness, as well as geographic proximity, is not a new phenomenon; what is new – a result of individualization – would be that relationships with close family members (*e.g.* siblings, but especially parents) would depend on emotional closeness. In this regard, we can assume that the lower the normative solidarity, the less contact among family members; that is, identification with the traditional norms of mutual support. This hypothesis will be discussed in chapter 3.

Hypothesis 4 on functional solidarity: As a result of the redefinition of the norms of family solidarity (seeing family solidarity as secondary – hypothesis 1), the level of support provided by the family should be less intense; in other words, less frequent and involving less investment of resources (money or time). On the other hand, in line with hypothesis 3, support should also be influenced by emotional closeness and the degree of normative solidarity. This hypothesis is analysed in chapters 4 and 5.

Methodology and sources of data

The impact of individualization on the different dimensions of family solidarity must be analysed from both a longitudinal and structural perspective. On the one hand, we must analyse changes in the different dimensions of solidarity, and on the other, the impact that changes in the family resulting from individualization have on the different dimensions of solidarity. Unfortunately we only have limited comparative data over time, so our analysis is focused on describing and studying the impact of individualization on different dimensions of family solidarity.

As has been pointed out before, individualization is a social process that has generated changes in values and social norms as well as in the structure and dynamics of the relationships among members of the nuclear family.

The main changes have been in the definition of family roles and the norms that govern family relationships, the reduction of family size, the pluralisation of forms of family life and the emergence of the negotiating family. We do not have sufficient data or indicators to analyse all of these changes because the survey samples of the population – which are analysed here – only include the most common social practices and situations, not the least common. For this reason, we cannot study the differences – if they exist – in the patterns of family solidarity in "new families" with those of the nuclear family, but we can analyse the effect of other changes. Our analysis is focused on the effects brought about by the reduction in family size, the change in family norms and the emergence of the negotiating family.

The indicators we have used to analyse the effects of the reduction in family size are the number of children or siblings, as well as the presence of daughters or sisters. To analyse the impact of changes in norms we have constructed a global indicator that we call the "individualization index" based on the level of rejection of the norms of mutual support between generations, compiled in table 1.1 and discussed in chapter 1. This indicator is constructed based on the sum of responses given to questions related to the degree of agreement with certain normative propositions on a scale of 1 (totally agree) to 5 (totally disagree), so that the higher the score, the less identification with the norms of intergenerational solidarity. The degree of internal consistency of the responses (Cronbach's alpha = 0.55) is not as high as desirable but the level is acceptable.

Identifying an indicator for the evolution of the negotiating family is more problematic because, on the one hand, it is a construct that refers to changes in multiple dimensions of family life (Meil, 2006) and, on the other hand, the changes in the dynamic of relationships among family members has been so widespread that only vestiges of the patriarchal family remain. One central aspect of the changes associated with the emergence of the negotiating family is that the relationships among members are less pre-determined socially, and there is greater scope for the parties to agree on the content of the relationship. The emergence of divorce by mutual agreement, both as a social practice and as a possibility in the couple's future, is one of the manifestations of the negotiating

family. This demonstrates that the "quality" of relationships – the emotional closeness – has become central in marital relationships. This is not to suggest that emotional relationships were not important in family life in the past, at least since the emergence of modern society, as has been demonstrated by historians of the family, but with the emergence of the negotiating family, emotional closeness has become more important.

The corollary of this process is that family relationships are maintained because there is affinity and not because of social norms associated with blood ties and alliances. An indicator of the impact of this dimension of family change should be able to measure emotional closeness with non-coresiding family members. This indicator could be the score given by respondents on a scale of 1 to 10 to the question: "Considering all aspects of the relationship, how close do you feel to your mother/child /sibling?" This question has already been used in other similar studies (Bonvalet *et al*. 1999). The use of this indicator as representative of the negotiating family is, however, problematic; as there is only one indicator, it does not adequately capture all the changes associated with the emergence of the negotiating family. In the absence of a more suitable indicator, we will analyse, however, the scope of its impact on different dimensions of family solidarity, considering its possible interpretation in the corresponding sections.

This research is based on multiple sources of data, but the main source is the *Redes Sociales y Solidaridad, 2007* [The Survey on Social Networks and Solidarity, 2007] (in the text abbreviated as ERSS 2007), designed by the author and financed by the Community of Madrid and the Autonomous University of Madrid (project CCG06UAM/HUM0381), as well as by the Secretary of State for Science and Technology Policy (project SEJ200608676). The fieldwork was conducted by the company, Metroscopia, during the months of November and December 2007. The technical specifications for this survey are included in the methodological appendix. We received a research grant from the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociologicas* [Centre for Sociological Research] (CIS) (resolution of 8 January 2008) in order to carry out the analysis. In addition to the aforementioned survey, we have also used various surveys from the CIS, as well as others developed within the framework of European projects such

as the Social Networks II survey of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP, 2001); waves two (2004) and four (2008) of the European Social Survey (ESS); the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS, 2004/2005); the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE, 2004 and 2007) and the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS, 2007).[1]

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(1) The related web page addresses are cited in the corresponding appendix.

I. Norms of family solidarity

As was pointed out in the introduction, one dimension of solidarity consists of the values and norms people identify with and that guide their behaviour. These norms do not refer so much to the criteria guiding behaviour within the family (*i.e.* when individuals relate to their children, parents, grandchildren, etc.) but more to the validity that such norms have in abstract terms, as maxims of behaviour that individuals must follow in the family sphere and by which they are judged by the rest of society.

In this chapter we will address the validity of the first hypothesis formulated in the introduction. To do this, we will discuss the scope of the Spanish population's identification – in comparison with other European countries – with a set of norms regarding mutual support among family members, as well as to what extent the process of individualization has eroded or redefined the content of these norms. The norms that are most clearly defined socially and that in general are more stringent in terms of prescriptive content are those that refer to obligations of mutual support between parents and adult children; we will, therefore, focus our attention on these norms of intergenerational solidarity. In particular we will look at the role of family solidarity in providing for individual welfare, as opposed to state aid or the purchase of services in the market, when help is needed. Since the situations in which individuals may need support are very diverse, we focus our attention on those dimensions that have been most commonly studied, namely, childcare and the care of the dependent elderly.

Unfortunately the data that is available for this analysis is limited and has not been systematically collected to permit a comparison over time. This

dimension has been quite neglected in the majority of studies on ageing and family care, as well as in studies on childcare. The interest of researchers in these fields has focused primarily on understanding real practices, more than on the norms that guide behaviours. The CIS surveys, the common source of information on the opinions of the Spanish population, also do not contain much information in this regard, and the data we have access to does not really meet our objectives. In addition, the available indicators are not repeated over time so that we cannot analyse their evolution. For our purposes, we will base our analysis on the questions included in our baseline survey, which replicate those designed for the Gender and Generations Survey of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (see www.ggpi.org).

1.1. Continuity and change in norms of family solidarity

Norms of mutual support among family members in times of need are widely accepted in Spain, at least in regard to intergenerational relationships, which are the only ones we have data for. As can be seen in table 1.1, the norms that establish the obligation to provide financial support between generations in the face of economic need are accepted by almost all of the population, whether regarding support from parents to emancipated adult children or the reverse. In the dimension of personal care requiring time and effort, the acceptance of norms that establish the obligation to provide mutual support to non-coresiding family members is not as widespread, although such norms do continue to be accepted by the majority. Thus, two out of three of the respondents identify with the idea that it is the grandparents' duty to look after their grandchildren when the parents are unable to do so; although the concrete practice of this norm may mean different things to different people, as the definition of need and degree of care required can vary.

Regarding care for the elderly, the norm that has emerged in recent decades is what Rosenmayr (1967) referred to as "intimacy at a distance", in reference to the idea that the elderly must live independently but close by, as long as health permits (Tobio *et al*. 2010). However, when parents can no longer take care of themselves, the traditional norm of adult generations

co-residing continues to enjoy majority support (68%). In other words, the norm that the family (*i.e.* the children) must take care of its elderly members continues to be accepted by the majority of the population. This obligation, however, does not mean that the children must adjust their work lives and schedules to the needs of their elderly parents.

TABLE 1.1

Percentage in agreement with different norms of intergenerational solidarity in different countries

	ES	DE	FR	RO	HG	BU
Parents should support their adult children financially if they have economic difficulties	84	66	77	73	–	67
Children should support their parents financially when they have economic difficulties	94	59	66	83	53	82
Grandparents should look after their grandchildren when parents cannot do it	64	77	74	76	–	74
Parents should live with their children when they can no longer live alone	68	45	43	71	23	79
Children should adjust their work around their parents' needs	42	25	12	19	58	32
When parents need to be taken care of, daughters should be more involved in the care than sons	19	16	9	29	27	23

Note: The difference of each percentage up to 100 represents the percentage of persons that do not identify with the corresponding statement. " –" means that the question was not asked in the corresponding country. Legend: ES= Spain; DE= Germany; FR= France; RO= Romania; HG= Hungary; BU= Bulgaria. Population from 18 to 79 years of age.
Source: For Spain, ERSS 2007 and for the other countries, micro data from the Gender and Generations survey, first wave 2004-2005, in http://www.ggp-i.org.

In addition, the traditional assignment of dependent elderly care to daughters – as a norm, though not as a practice (Perez Ortiz, 2003; Crespo and Lopez, 2008) – is no longer accepted by more than just a small minority (primarily, the elderly of both sexes, as well as individuals with low levels of education). Along with the redefinition of gender roles which has taken place within the framework of the process of individualization

outlined in the introduction, the vast majority of the population believes that the responsibility for care corresponds to both sons and daughters.

The validity of these norms, however, is not the same throughout society. Although there are no significant differences in regard to the obligation to provide financial support to family members when they are in situations of economic difficulty, this is not the case with norms regarding the obligation to provide services of personal support. The greatest differences in this case are based on age and education level and, to a lesser extent, the size of the municipality of residence. Especially noteworthy is the absence of differences based on the sex of the respondent regarding all of the norms included.

Regarding grandparents providing care for their grandchildren, there is a marked difference of opinion by age, as the younger the individual is, the lower is the identification with the norm. There also tends to be less identification with this norm, the higher the level of education. It is above all parents with pre-school children (under three years of age) who identify the least with this norm (49% compared to 68%), although objectively they are the ones who benefit most from this norm, given the difficulties of reconciling work and family for parents with young children. This difference based on age is related to the majority of younger generations wanting to maintain their independence from their parents and, above all, to the idea that grandparents should not be saddled with responsibilities that are not theirs. If in the recent past grandparents played an important role in their daughters' strategies to balance family and work, preferences have changed in the area of norms, moving toward the idea that parental support is for emergencies rather than as a substitute for parents when they work. Thus, according to results from study number 2.578 of the CIS (2004), the majority of individuals under 39 years of age (51%) think that "it is better to take your children to a day-care centre than to leave them with grandparents or relatives", as do those who are between 40 and 59 years of age (53%); in both age groups a significant percentage are undecided (15% and 16% respectively).

In other words, only a minority thinks that young children should be taken care of exclusively by a family member (Mari-Klose *et al*. 2010). The model of the "caregiving grandmother" has turned into the model of the

"babysitting grandparents" (in which both grandmother and grandfather are included), who only provide more or less occasional though recurring support, but not as a substitute for parental care.

Using the terminology normally employed to describe the distribution of domestic tasks between marital partners, it can be said that solidarity in this area has been redefined as the obligation to "help" but not to "collaborate" in the care of children. In regard to taking care of elderly dependent persons in the home, on the other hand, it is young people who most identify with this norm (76% of those under 40 years of age) as well as those over 70 years of age (69%). There is less identification with this norm (59%) for those who are at the age of having dependent elderly parents (50 to 69 years of age). The fact that the elderly respect and follow this norm does not mean that this is their preferred choice; thus, in response to the question, "In the case of needing help, what living situation do you prefer?" (in the CIS survey 2006b), only 11% said they would prefer "to live with their children". The majority responded that they would prefer "to live at home with assistance and care" (77%). In this sense, this norm does not refer to the obligation of the generations to live together, but to who must accept responsibility for caring for the dependent elderly.

The fact that young people identify more with the norms to provide care for elderly dependent relatives than do the elderly themselves is one of the most consistent findings in the relevant literature (Katz *et al*. 2003; Daatland and Herlofson, 2003). The interpretation given to this finding has been that younger generations identify more strongly with norms of filial responsibility because of their own greater dependence on their parents than previous generations. In this regard, the norms of filial responsibility for the care of their parents, far from eroding, would be stronger among younger generations of adults, which could be attributed to the socialization in a family which is increasingly more democratic and that has given them greater levels of well-being, thanks to the development of the consumer society. But the identification with the norm of filial obligations towards parents is not a linear relationship; instead, as has been pointed out, there is a "u-shaped" age-effect. Those who identify least with this norm are adults at an age in which they typically have to face their own parents becoming ill and dependent. However, the majority

norm is that of filial obligation to take care of dependent parents, which implies the co-residence of generations when the elderly can no longer take care of themselves.

TABLE 1.2

Percentage of persons with a familist, non-familist or ambivalent conception of intergenerational solidarity

	SPAIN	GERMANY	FRANCE	RUSSIA	ROMANIA	BULGARIA
Familist	56	32	30	58	53	51
Ambivalent	38	45	52	33	36	38
Non- familist	6	23	18	9	11	11
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Note: Familist = identification with four or five of the norms included in table 1.1 (except for the last one); ambivalent = identification with two or three norms, and non-familist = identification with none or with only one norm.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey and from the Gender and Generations survey (2004-2005), see http://www.ggp-i.org.

However, norms of filial responsibility are not accepted at any price. When providing care enters into conflict with work, the majority of the population believes that work responsibilities take priority. Thus, "only" 42% identify with the principle that "children should adjust their workload to the needs of their parents"; the younger the respondents are and the higher their education, the less agreement with this principle. In addition, as will be seen in the following section, the family is not considered to be the only institution responsible for the care of the dependent elderly.

A more comprehensive perspective can be obtained by grouping persons according to the number of norms they identify with, as was done by Katz *et al*. (2003). Excluding the norm of responsibilities based on gender – which has been widely rejected – it is possible to establish a typology of the degree of identification with the norms of family solidarity between generations. On one end there are those with a "familistic" conception of solidarity, who identify with four or five of the norms analysed; on the other end are those who only identify with one or two of the norms and who can be described as "non-familistic". In an intermediate situation are those who identify with some of the norms but not others, and who can be labelled "ambivalent".

As we can see in table 1.2, the majority of the population has a very familistic conception of intergenerational solidarity (56%), while those who reject the norms of mutual support between generations are a very small minority (6%); however, the proportion of individuals who demonstrate ambivalence is considerable (38%). The younger population and those with the highest level of education are the least familistic. This suggests that a generational change is taking place, although a comparison of age groups does not indicate changing trends, but instead, as suggested before, different points of view depending on the objective situation in which the individuals find themselves.

In comparison with other countries, as can be seen in tables 1.1 and 1.2, the proportion of the Spanish population that identifies with norms of intergenerational solidarity is much higher than in the countries of central Europe (Germany and France). In contrast, a comparison with the countries of eastern Europe shows similar levels of identification with norms of family solidarity, but with one noticeable difference: In Spain the norms of financial support between generations are almost universally accepted, while in the countries of eastern Europe, they are not as widespread, especially in relation to parents providing financial support to their adult children. In regard to personal care that requires time and effort, identification with the norms of providing care is not as widespread in Spain as in the other countries analysed. Overall, however, the familistic conception of intergenerational solidarity is as widespread in Spain as in Russia, Romania and Bulgaria.

The OASIS study data (Lowenstein and Ogg, 2003) also confirm – in comparison with other countries and other indicators – that the acceptance of the norms of intergenerational solidarity is very widespread in Spain, much more than in countries of northern Europe and in Israel (see table 1.3). But this study also reveals that the degree of support for these norms depends on the terms in which they are formulated. Thus, when the concept "sacrifice" is introduced, there is less identification with the norm, reaching the same levels as found in other countries.

TABLE 1.3

Percentage in agreement with different norms of intergenerational solidarity in different countries

	ES	DE	RU	NO	IL
Married adult children should live close to their parents in order to help them if needed	57	40	31	29	55
Adult children should be willing to sacrifice things they want for their children in order to help their elderly parents	44	36	47	41	37
Elderly people should be able to depend on their adult children when they need help	60	55	41	58	51
Parents have the right to some type of compensation for all the sacrifices they have made for their children	55	26	48	38	64

Note: The difference of each percentage up to 100 represents the percentage of persons that do not identify with the corresponding statement. Legend ES=Spain; DE= Germany; RU= United Kingdom; NO= Norway; IL= Israel. Urban population over 18 years of age.
Source: S.O.Datland and K.Herlofson (2003), "Norms and Ideals about Elder Care", p. 137, in Lowenstein and Ogg, (2003), available in http://oasis.haifa.ac.il/.

1.2. Family solidarity and the welfare state

The fact that norms of mutual support among family members are widely accepted does not mean that the family is seen as the only form of support, nor does it mean that there has not been a process of redefining responsibilities. Concretely, the demands for greater involvement of government in the care of children as well as the dependent elderly date back a long time and have been constant.

The demand for pre-schools and public day-care centres –in order to facilitate the incorporation of women into the labour force as well as to solve the problems of balancing family and work – is a long-term social demand. In a survey from 2001, 93% of respondents thought that it was the "government's responsibility to provide childcare for everyone who wants it" (ISSP, 2001), while in countries such as Finland this percentage was 77% or in France, 73%. In the debates on policies to reconcile family life and work, this is also one of the primary demands of families with small children. We have already pointed out that the preference for this form of childcare has been on the increase and has now become the preferred option for the majority. This has taken place without the

emergence of ideological opposition to day-care and in favour of childcare within the family among psychologists or pedagogues (Mari-Klose *et al*. 2010).

Regarding care for dependent persons, the demand for public authorities to develop social services in this area has also been growing and has now become almost universal. Thus, already in 1997, 85% believed that "more and better nursing homes would resolve the problem of the elderly who cannot live alone" (CIS, 1997); while in 2004, 94% believed that "the state should cover the needs of the elderly through social services" (CIS, 2004). The predominant model of care, however, does not assign responsibility for the care of dependent elderly persons to the state, but instead, the state is seen as sharing this responsibility with the family, or complementing the family's role. Although 90% think that "caring for elderly parents is primarily the children's problem", 82% also think that "caring for elderly parents is not only the children's problem but is also the responsibility of society and the state" (CIS, 1997). Even the elderly themselves, whether dependent or not, believe that the family should not be solely responsible for care, as can be seen in table 1.4. This normative model of sharing responsibilities between family and the state is common in other countries with a developed welfare state and with a limited familistic conception of intergenerational solidarity, such as Germany; while in Norway or Israel, the welfare state is seen as having primary responsibility for the care of the elderly, and the family is assigned the role of support (Katz *et al*. 2003).

Although these models of shared responsibilities for caregiving are far from actual practice primarily because of a shortage of public resources (Rodriguez, Mateo and Sancho, 2005; Abellan and Esparza, 2009; Tobio *et al*. 2010), they reveal that in terms of social representations, responsibility for the care of dependent persons is no longer assigned solely to the family.

TABLE 1.4

Percentage in agreement with different models of distribution of responsibilities between the state and the family in the care of the elderly: Population 65 years of age and older

	NOT DEPENDENT	DEPENDENT	TOTAL
Public administrations must care for the elderly	12	12	12
Public administrations and the family must care for the elderly	34	31	33
The family must be primarily responsible, with help from public administrations	44	40	43
The family must be responsible for all caregiving	6	5	5
DK/NA	5	12	7
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

Note: Respondents who need help with one or more daily activities are considered dependent.
Source: Compiled from data from the CIS study 2.647, Living Conditions of the Elderly (2006), population 65 years of age and older.

1.3. Individualization and norms of family solidarity

The process of individualization behind the major changes in family life has not led to a loss of the validity of norms of family solidarity in Spain or in other countries. However, this does not mean they have been left unchanged. Although there is greater acceptance of traditional norms of intergenerational solidarity in Spain than in the countries of central and northern Europe, these norms have undergone a profound process of redefinition in which the family has lost its centrality in the obligation to provide support to its members. This has led to a greater reliance on resources available in the market or, especially, from the state. However, this trend has slowed down because of the economic crisis, resulting in the norms of mutual support within the family being reinforced. In this regard, the hypothesis we began with has only been partially fulfilled.

Thus, although most people believe that parents and children should help each other out economically in case of need, in 2004, before the impact of the economic crisis, almost half the population also believed that if a person has to borrow money, it is best to get a loan from a bank rather than from a family member (see graph 1.1). This was especially the case

among the middle-aged population between 40 and 59 years of age (49%) as well as for those over 60 (41%), more so than for young people (38%). Relying on family solidarity, thus, seems to increasingly be seen as a last resort or for emergencies when one needs money, rather than as a first recourse.

Regarding personal services requiring time, dedication and effort, the norms of family solidarity are also being redefined in the same direction, with family solidarity becoming secondary, as discussed above. Moreover, there has been a widespread rejection of women being assigned the sole responsibility of caregiver for dependent family members. Although not always the case in practice, caregiving is now seen as the responsibility of both men and women.

However, if we observe the trends in terms of adherence to norms over time, we find results that cast doubt on this interpretation, as seen in graph 1.1. Thus, looking at indicators on data from before and after the economic crisis, we see that as a result of the crisis and the difficulties it has generated (*e.g.* unemployment, lack of economic resources, the fiscal crisis of the state and cuts in social spending, the banking crisis and difficulty of access to credit, among others), there has been a decline in the identification with norms in favour of non-family resources, instead of those provided by family members.

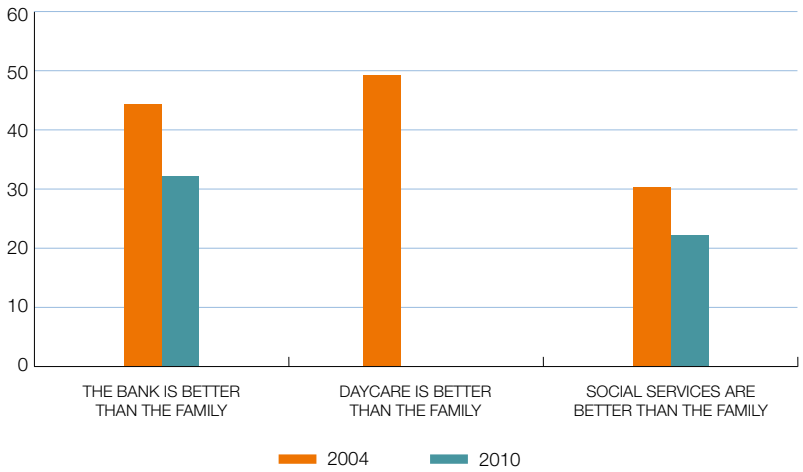
This strengthening of family solidarity is particularly marked in regards to economic solidarity. The proportion of people who identify with the statement "if you need to borrow money, it is better to go to a bank than to ask the family for money" has fallen from 44% to 32%. This change is particularly strong among younger adults (under 39 years of age), who are most affected by the crisis and who, as will be seen later on, are also the main beneficiaries of financial support from the family. However, this strengthening of the norms of economic solidarity has occurred in all age groups.

In the area of caregiving the same trend has also occurred, at least in the dimension for which we obtained data, which is the care of elderly dependent persons. The percentage of persons who agree with the statement "when a person cannot take care of him or herself, it is preferable

to turn for support to social services than to the family" has fallen from 30% to 22%, a decline of eight points. As measured by this response, the strengthening of family solidarity has been greater among young people than among the elderly (a 10 point decline in agreement among those under 39, compared to six points among those over 60). We do not believe that this indicator calls into question the conception that has emerged (that the responsibility to take care of the elderly cannot fall entirely on families); rather it reflects a lack of trust in the capacity of public administrations to finance social services and in addition, the need to strengthen norms of family solidarity.

GRAPH 1.1

Percentage of persons that agree with different options between family solidarity and the market or the state



The statements that respondents were asked to agree or disagree with are: 1) If you need to borrow money, it is better to go to a bank than to ask the family. 2) It is better for children to go to a daycare center or to hire a babysitter than to rely on the family. 3) When a person cannot take care of him or herself, it is preferable to turn to social services than to family.
Source: Compiled from data from the CIS study 2.578 (2004) and study 2.844 (2010).

Among a part of the population, the economic crisis has raised the need to strengthen the norms of family solidarity in response to threats to individual well-being derived from the *risk society* (as Ulrich Beck would say) and manifested in high rates of unemployment and state fiscal deficits.

It would be a paradox of individualization that after having created such profound changes in so many aspects of family life, the economic crisis would reverse these changes, strengthening family solidarity. Although the family, as the primary social group, has always been considered the last stronghold in times of need, we do not believe that the underlying trend of a redefinition of the norms of family solidarity has come to an end.

II. Structural solidarity: Structure of the family network and geographic proximity of family members

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the structure and composition of family networks in terms of the number of members, age structure and generational structure, as well as spatial distribution. This aspect of the family, as seen in the introduction, is what Bengtson and colleagues call "structural solidarity". This analysis is important for several reasons. The social network, whose primary constituent is the family network, forms an important part of the resources available to individuals to achieve their life goals and satisfy their needs. In this regard, the social network is part of the "capital" individuals have available to achieve their well-being and is what is referred to specifically as "social capital" (Requena, 2008). But social networks are formed by different types of social bonds, primarily those of kinship, but equally important may be bonds of friendship and even those between neighbours. However, the type of "capital" that flows through these different types of bonds is not the same because the norms and expectations governing the interactions within each type of relationship are not the same. In other words, the relationship that exists between parents and children is not the same as with friends, neighbours, aunts and uncles, grandparents, siblings, etc. The forms and content of the contact, the type of emotional support or other support flowing through each of these bonds, as well as the potential for solidarity they represent are different. This is well recognized by individuals through their personal experiences as we will see in later chapters. It is, therefore, important to determine the composition of individuals' social networks.

In addition, demographic changes in the recent and not so recent past have profoundly altered the age structure and composition of family networks. The fall in the birth rate starting in the second half of the 1970s,

as a result of what has been called the "second demographic transition" (Van de Kaa, 1987), has resulted in younger generations being less numerous and an increase in the proportion of adults without children or with smaller families. At the same time, the number of large families has declined. In addition, the continued improvement in the standard of living has led to increased life expectancy for all generations. In short, people have fewer children and siblings, and parents and grandparents live longer. In graphic terms this change of structure has been described as the "beanpole family structure" (Bengston, Rosenthal and Burton, 1990; Treas, 1995) or the "verticalization" of family networks (Abellan and Esparza, 2009). For the reasons stated above, it is interesting to know the extent to which these types of changes in the age structure of kinship networks have occurred.

Another aspect of great importance in the density of relationships among members of the family network is their geographical location. Despite the development of multiple and sophisticated means of communication between individuals (*e.g.* mobile phones, email or Internet phoning), geographic proximity remains key to many of the activities carried out jointly by members of the network and that contribute to their welfare. As noted by Rossi and Rossi (1990), accessibility is the basis for all interaction and for the exchange of support, and this accessibility is greatly conditioned by physical proximity. Fifty percent or more of the variation in the frequency of visits to the closest members of the network can be explained by physical proximity (Meil, 2002a). In all the analyses of frequency of contact between generations, how far parents and children live from each other is the variable with the greatest influence (Finley, 1989; Logan and Spitze, 1996; Nave Herz, 2002; Hank, 2007). Frequency of contact, in turn, determines the exchange of support, as with distance and a decrease in contact, feelings of mutual obligation are weakened, emotional closeness tends to suffer, and mutual support – especially personal services – becomes less frequent. It is, therefore, important to know how geographically dispersed individuals' social networks are and whether they are becoming more geographically dispersed. In particular, it is important to know if distances between the generations are increasing as a result of the process of individualization referred to in the introduction.

2.1. General characteristics of the structure of family networks

Given that, with few exceptions, we are all born and raised in a family, almost everyone is embedded in a network of family relationships that are maintained more or less actively depending on circumstances and compatibility with other members. According to the ERSS 2007, the average number of blood relatives (grandparents, parents, siblings, children and grandchildren) of the population residing in Spain – that is, considering only vertical and horizontal lines of the kinship network (excluding aunts, uncles and cousins) – is 6.3, varying from less than three (6%) to more than 25 (0.1%). If we expand the categories of kin to also include relatives by marriage (spouse/partner, grandparents, parents, siblings and nieces and nephews on both sides), with whom there is a more or less strong bond depending on position occupied in the kinship network and based on affinity, the average number of relatives reaches 19.3, ranging from a minimum of less than three (2%) and a maximum of 40 (5%).

The number of members making up the family network not only varies from one individual to another, but is also primarily a function of an individual's stage in the life cycle; for example, if one has formed a family or not, if one's siblings have done so, or if one is approaching the end of life. As is evident, the kinship network of those who have decided to form a family is larger than for those who have not. While the average number of blood relatives and in-laws is 22.2 among those with children, among those who do not have children the average is 11.4. Overall, the number of relatives varies with age, so that the older one is, the more relatives one has, given that older individuals are more likely to have formed a family and to have had children. For those under 30 years of age, the average number of blood relatives and in-laws is 12.7, while for those 60 years old and over, the average number rises to 22.9, although the standard deviation is high (12.2 for the whole sample, increasing with age).

Overall, therefore, individuals have large family networks, which can range on average from six members among young people who have not opted to initiate a life project with another person, up to 26 members among those who are already grandparents. Those who really have no family network, by blood or marriage, are merely token cases. Also rare are networks with

very few members (only 6% have a network of fewer than six members). Those with a smaller network are, logically, those who do not have siblings or children.

We saw before that as a consequence of increased life expectancy and the decrease in the birth rate, the age composition of the kinship network has changed dramatically; the number of living ascendant relatives has increased and the number of children has decreased.

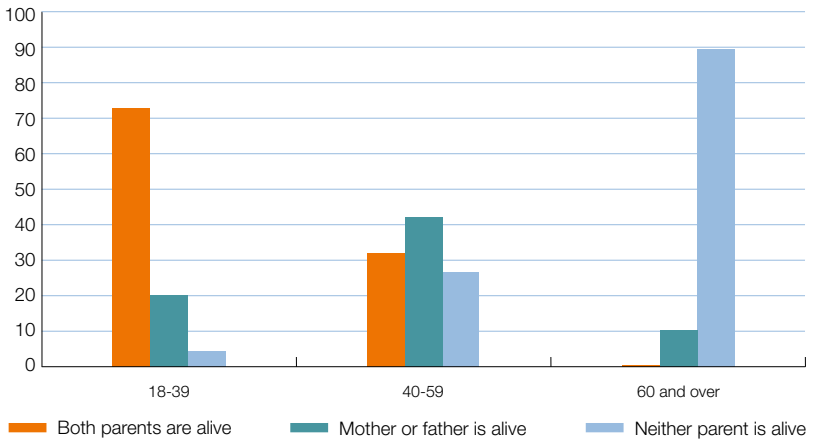
The percentage of emancipated adults with at least one living parent is 64% and, of course, this varies depending on the respondent's age (graph 2.1). When children initially move out of their parents' home, normally both parents are alive; as they get older, the proportion who lose first the father and then the mother increases. While this is a natural pattern, there has been a change in recent decades; there are now an increasing number of persons who still have one of their parents living at an age uncommon in the past. Thus, 73% of the population between 40 and 59 years of age still has one of their parents alive, while among those over 60 years of age, the proportion is 9%. Even 1% of persons over 70 still have a living parent, as can be seen in the *Condiciones de Vida de los Mayores* survey [Living Conditions of the Elderly Survey] (CIS, 2006b). If we also consider parents-in-law, the chance of having a member of the previous generation living increases significantly, so that 17% of the population 60 years of age and over living with a partner has at least one parent or parent-in-law alive (86% in the group aged 40 to 59). The percentage of persons in a couple that have both parents and both parents-in-law alive is also high, 11% among those 40 to 59 year of age.

Regarding children, the proportion of adults without children has grown consistently from generation to generation, although the proportion is higher among more recent generations than among those that have already completed their reproductive period. Among women born between 1931 and 1935, the percentage without children is 8%; this percentage reaches 10% among those born in the first half of the decade of the 1950s. The pace accelerated in subsequent generations, so that 12% of those born in the first half of the 1960s do not have children (Delgado, 2007: 93). Given the long delay in recent decades in the age when women decide to have children, it is expected that the proportion of those without children will

increase, as delays in childbearing are associated with couples having fewer children or no children (Delgado, Zamora and Barrios, 2006).

GRAPH 2.1

Percentage of respondents that have a living parent, by age



Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

However, the vast majority of emancipated adults do decide to have children, especially when they have consolidated a relationship. According to the *Fecundidad, Familia y Valores* survey [Fertility, Family and Values Survey] (CIS, 2006a), in which only women were interviewed, the average number of living children of women over 40 is 2.37, but this number varies considerably with age. The average number of children has been decreasing from generation to generation with the evolving demographic transition (Delgado, 2007; Delgado, Meil and Zamora, 2008). Thus, among women born in the first half of the 1930s, the average number of children was 2.92, while among those born between 1960 and 1965 the average was 1.79. Among those born later, the number is even lower; although their reproductive cycle is not necessarily over, on average they will have fewer children. The pattern followed is now well known; large families (with three or more children) have become increasingly rare, while families with two children have become not only the dominant ideal model, but

also the common size of the family, and families with only one child have increased (Delgado, 2007). This change can be seen, above all, among the generations born starting in the second half of the 1950s, who reached adulthood when family planning had become a social norm (after the end of the Franco dictatorship).

Given the central role of women in the family network, it is interesting to look at the gender composition of children and the presence or absence of daughters. As we know, the chance of having daughters depends on the number of children one has. If a family has one child, there is a slightly higher chance of having a boy than of having a girl as there are always more boys born than girls, although males have a slightly higher probability of dying than females at all ages. When a couple has two children, the probability of having a boy and a girl is the same as the probability of both children being the same sex, although in the latter case, it is slightly more likely that they will be two boys than two girls because of the greater probability of having a boy (table 2.1).

TABLE 2.1

Composition by sex of children based on the number of living children: Percentage of those that have children

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	1	2	3+	TOTAL
Only sons	56	27	15	31
Sons and daughters	–	48	75	44
Only daughters	44	25	10	25
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	218	395	249	862

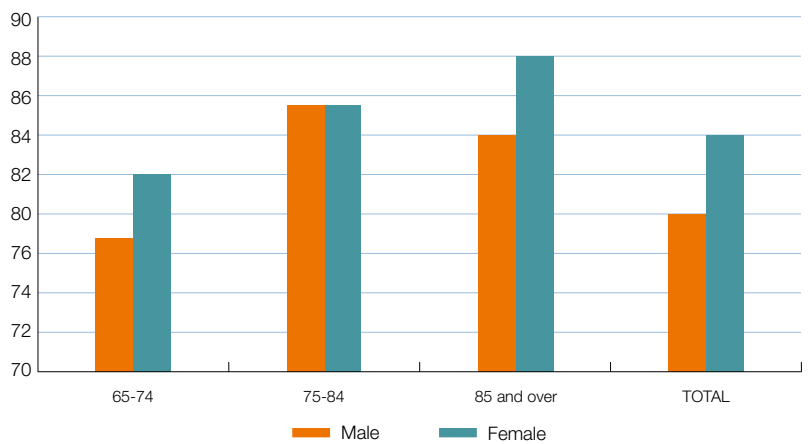
Note: Contingency coefficient G=0.49 p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

With the systematic delay of motherhood in the generations born beginning in the second half of the 20th century (Delgado, 2007), the age at which parents become grandparents has increased. According to the ERSS 2007 survey, 7% of women between 40 and 49 have grandchildren, but it is from 50 years of age on, when grandparenthood becomes more frequent; for example, one in three women between the ages of 50 to 59 have at least one grandchild (34%). From 60 years of age on, the vast

majority of women and men have grandchildren, and the percentage increases with age. According to the previously mentioned Living Conditions of the Elderly Survey (CIS, 2006b), 84% of women and 80% of men 65 years of age and older have grandchildren, and this percentage rises to 92% and 89% respectively if only those who have children are considered (graph 2.2). In other words, the vast majority of parents have grandchildren by the time they reach the age of retirement. The greater the number of children, the greater the likelihood of having grandchildren, so reducing the number of children increases the likelihood of not having grandchildren, particularly in the case of having had only one child. Thus, 77% of those over 65 with one child have at least one grandchild, compared with 90% of those with two children, and 95% of those with three.

GRAPH 2.2

Percentage of persons 65 years of age and older that have grandchildren, by age and sex



Source: Compiled from data from the CIS study 2.674, Living Conditions of the Elderly, (2006).

The number of grandchildren logically depends on age and the number of children one has. Thus, the average number of grandchildren is 4.8 for those over 65 (CIS, 2006b), but the average number of grandchildren rises from 4.1 among those aged 65 to 74 years to 5.4 among those over 75.

Among those who have only one child (and are over 65 and have grandchildren) the average number is 2.1, while among those who have had four or more children, the average number of grandchildren is 8.2, with a large variance.

Although the age of motherhood has been delayed, the increase in life expectancy has greatly increased the number of generations living at the same time. As shown in table 2.2, while the number of households where three generations live together is very low (in our sample no more than 4% of total households), the number of three-generation family networks (considering only the vertical line of the respondent or spouse) is in fact the most frequent, with almost two out of three respondents belonging to a network composed of members of three generations (62%). Moreover, the co-existence of four generations in some stage of the life cycle is far from uncommon (20%), occurring mainly among people in their thirties, when one becomes a parent and has a grandparent still living, or at the end of working life, when one becomes a grandparent and has a parent still alive. The co-existence of five generations, in contrast, is rare. As to be expected, those who have not opted to have a family or who have not lived with a partner, have a family network with fewer generations, consisting of the generation to which they belong and that of their ascendant relatives. If one has nieces and nephews but no children, the network structure in terms of generations hardly changes in regard to that shown in Table 2.2.

TABLE 2.2

Number of generations that make up the kinship network of the respondent and his or her spouse (if applicable), by age

NO.OF GENERATIONS	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 AND OVER	TOTAL
1	–	–	–	6	4	18	4
2	7	18	12	18	17	6	13
3	74	53	75	54	57	59	62
4	19	28	12	21	22	17	20
5			–				–
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	205	247	228	177	138	184	1,179

Note: '-' indicates fewer than five cases. Contingency coefficient C=0.35 p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Regarding siblings, the percentage of emancipated adults that have brothers and sisters is very high (91%) though varies by age and sex. Given that at all ages, more men die than women, the percentage of women without siblings is somewhat higher than men (11% of emancipated adult women and 7% of emancipated adult men). Among those over 65, this proportion is even higher, reaching an average of 18% for women and 15% for men and increasing with age (CIS, 2006b). If among the older generations the absence of siblings is determined mainly by the higher mortality rate among men, among the younger generations, it is mainly associated with declining fertility and the increase in families with one child.

Among emancipated adults, the average number of siblings, when they have them, is 2.6, but as noted above, varies with the differential mortality rates of the sexes and the fall in the birth-rate. Table 2.3 shows how the fall in the birth-rate results in an increasing proportion of adults without siblings or with only one and a decrease in those with many siblings. However, the proportion of individuals who say they have no siblings is only 10%, and those with three or more is very high (39%). As in the case of children, the probability of having sisters varies with the number of siblings, so that while 41% of people with only one sibling have a sister, among those with two it increases to 76%, and among those who have three siblings or more, it reaches 91%. Overall, two out of three emancipated adults (66%) have a sister; this percentage does not vary significantly with age.

TABLE 2.3

Percentage of persons that have siblings, by age and number of siblings

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
None	8	8	14	10
1	31	25	19	25
2	30	24	20	25
Three and more	30	43	47	39
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Average number (1)	2.3	2.9	2.8	2.7
Number of cases	453	405	320	1,178

Note: (1) Those that do not have siblings are not included. Coefficient of association for ordinal values, gamma = 0.12 $p \leq 0.01$.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Having presented the more general characteristics of the structure of the kinship network, we will analyse patterns of co-residence and residential proximity among members of the family network and the effects that the process of individualization has had on them.

2.2. Residential proximity of the family network

2.2.1. Co-residence between generations

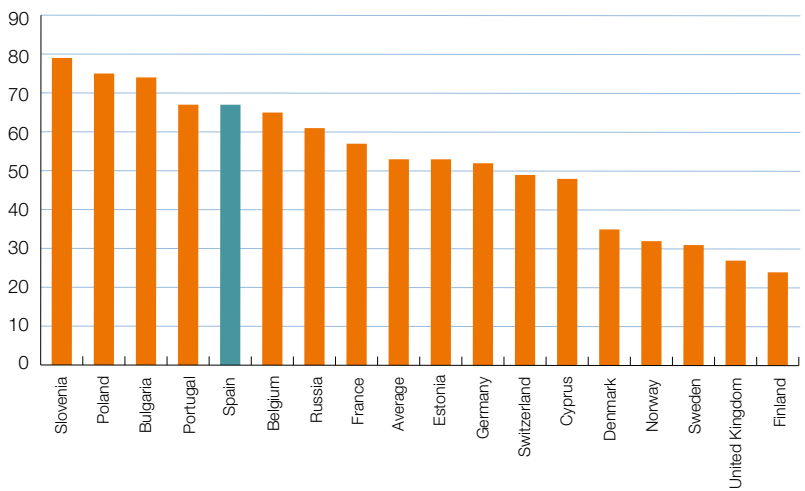
The principle governing the formation of a family is that of *neolocality*, a term that refers to the phenomenon of a young person who, wishing to realize his or her life goals together with a partner, leaves the parental home to form his or her own home. Only in special circumstances and very infrequently (remnants of the stem family, teenage pregnancy, certain immigrant groups, among others) does married life begin in the parental home. Even without having a partner, it is expected that children, once they have reached adulthood, will leave the parental home to form their own home.

Children remaining at home with their parents once they have completed their education may be thought of not so much as a manifestation of parental obligation to provide room and board, but more as an expression of solidarity between generations, as this is a way to help children become emancipated without having to lower their standard of living. Living at home with their parents allows adult children to cope with unemployment and job insecurity at a lower cost; co-residing functions as a type of "unemployment insurance" for young people. It also allows them to maintain or increase, depending on the circumstances, their level of consumption, save money and improve their borrowing capacity for the future purchase of a home, which is the dominant form of residential emancipation today. This form of traditional solidarity thus avoids a drop in socio-economic class for young people when they become independent; it seems to have gained importance with the development of consumer society, which has increased the cost of becoming independent. Not only is housing increasingly more expensive and harder to attain, but the levels of consumption required to become independent without producing a drop in socio-economic class are increasing.

It is well known that in Spain, as in other southern and eastern European countries, young people's emancipation from their parents' home is being delayed to a much later age in comparison to when their own parents left home. Although the proportion of young adults 18 to 29 years of age living with their parents has been declining since the mid-1990s, in particular due to the effect of immigration, but also to an earlier departure of Spanish youth from home (*Instituto de la Juventud*, 2008, Jimenez *et al.*, 2008), young Spaniards remain in the parental home until an age that in the past would have been considered unusually advanced. As shown in graph 2.3, while in Spain 67% of youth aged 18 to 29 were living in the parental home in 2008, in the Scandinavian countries the percentage is around 30%, and in the countries of Central Europe, 52%.

GRAPH 2.3

Percentage of young adults between 18 and 29 years of age that live in their parents' or in-laws' home



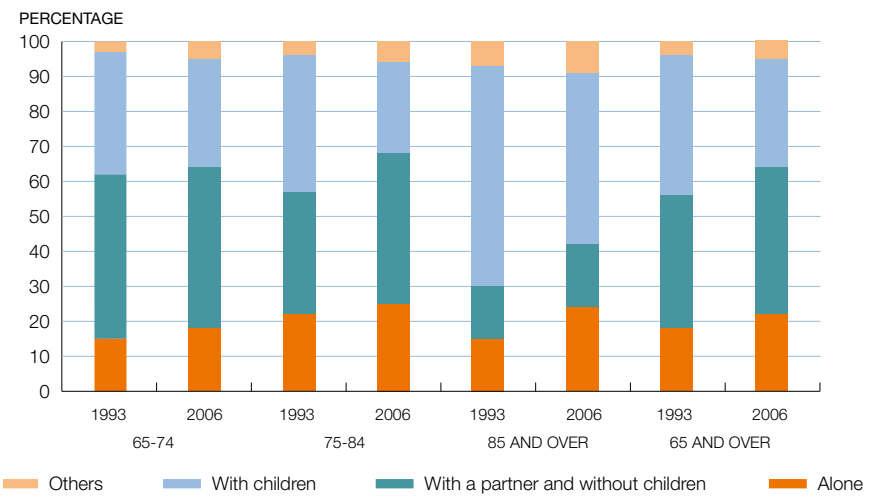
Source: Compiled from data from the European Social Survey, 2008. Adjusted data.

We will not examine the structural causes behind this delay in emancipation and the role that the welfare state model may play in explaining differences between different groups of countries. Here we will focus our attention on

the role played by the process of individualization in the delay (Jimenez *et al.* 2008; Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007). The process of individualization, far from eroding family solidarity, has strengthened it, generating a profound transformation in the norms governing the co-existence between the sexes and between generations in the home, a transformation enabling the different generations to live together without major generational conflicts after childhood. As noted in the introduction, individualization has led to the decline of the patriarchal family and the emergence of the negotiating family, and with this, the ability to negotiate the terms of co-existence between generations. As a result, young people have gained increasing autonomy, and both parents and children have achieved greater levels of satisfaction while living together (Meil, 2006, *Instituto de la Juventud*, 2008). If the emergence of the negotiating family has reduced parental control over the lives of children and with this improved family members' subjective well-being, reducing the size of families – also the result of individualization – has improved their material well-being, as there are fewer children to share the parents' resources and the space in the family home.

GRAPH 2.4

Forms of co-residence of the elderly (65 years of age and older) in 1993 and 2006, by age



Source: Compiled from data from the CIS studies 2.072 (1993) and 2.674 (2006).

The development of the negotiating family and the decreasing size of the family have made it easier in the context of the process of individualization for young people to postpone leaving home to an age that would have been unimaginable in the past. But the process of individualization has also favoured the opposite situation, namely, that children can leave home at much younger ages, as in the countries of northern and central Europe. In this sense, the process of individualization, understood as the loss of social control over individual life projects and the increase in individual autonomy in defining the self, has not led to the erosion of family solidarity. Instead, thanks to the changes it has generated in other dimensions of family dynamics, it has reinforced this solidarity.

Regarding patterns of co-residence of the elderly (65 and over) and their adult children, traditional norms in areas with stem families established co-residence of both generations throughout their lives. In those areas with nuclear families, there would be a re-grouping of generations in the same household upon widowhood or in the case of disability or dependency (Reher, 1996). The elderly, therefore, in general would co-reside with younger generations.

As noted in the previous chapter, as a result of the process of individualization, the norm of "intimacy at a distance" has become more widespread, with older generations and their adult children tending to live in separate homes for increasingly extended periods of time.

With smaller families, the systematic increase in life expectancy and the norm of "intimacy at a distance", the number of elderly couples (without children) and individuals living alone has been increasing over the last two decades.

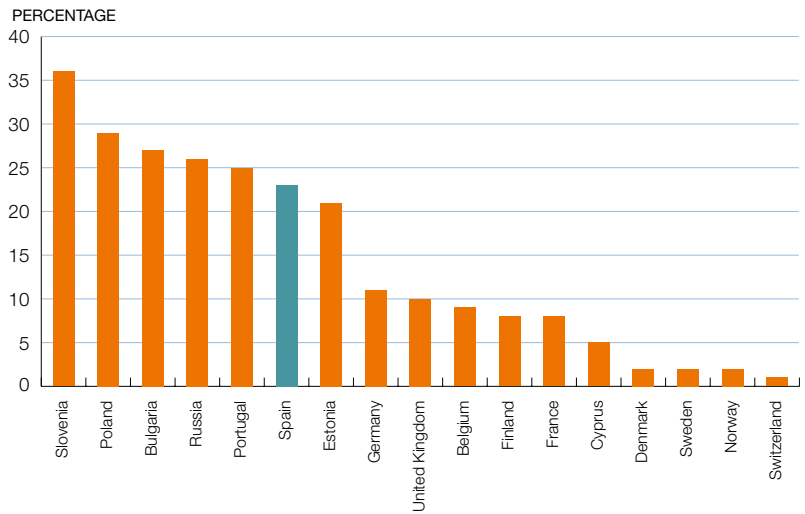
This increase in the number of persons living alone has occurred among all age groups but is especially strong in the population aged 85 and over, as shown in graph 2.4. However, the norm that the most elderly should live with their children remains widespread, as 48% of those over 84 years of age live with a son or daughter. However, this graph also shows that the proportion of persons in this age group living with children has declined significantly over the period considered (from 63% to 48%). Not only has the proportion of elderly living alone increased, but there has also been an

increase in "other homes" (from 7% to 9%), which encompasses heterogeneous circumstances, including the elderly living with a person providing live-in assistance, a situation that is gaining in importance. Illustrative of this process of change is the fact that while in 1993 the percentage of the elderly who lived with their children increased linearly as they got older, in 2006 this became "U-shaped" reflecting the plurality of forms of co-residence for the very old.

Compared with other countries, despite the sharp decrease in the number of elderly persons living in the same household as their children, this form of family solidarity is still much more widespread in Spain than in the countries of northern and central Europe, but less widespread than in eastern Europe (graph 2.5). It is very doubtful that this trend of seniors living as long as possible in their own homes will lead to the very low levels of co-residency among adult generations that we find in the

GRAPH 2.5

Proportion of persons 75 years of age and older that live with their children in different European countries (2008)



Source: Compiled from data from the European Social Survey, 2008. Adjusted data.

Scandinavian countries. We have seen in the previous chapter that the norm of different generations living together when the elderly can no longer live alone remains strong. However, we are now witnessing a process of redefining the terms in which it is considered impossible to continue living alone, as telecare and domestic service at a price affordable to large sections of society (thanks to immigration) are increasingly common realities. A CIS survey (CIS 2.844) in 2010 confirms that the proportion of adults over 65 living alone continues to increase (from 22% in 2006 to 23%), while those who live with their children is decreasing (from 31% to 25%).

2.2.2. The geographic proximity of non-coresiding members of the family network

The distance between members of the family network who do not live in the same household is generally not very great. As we can see in table 2.4, two out of three persons have at least one of their immediate family members (parents, siblings or children) living less than 30 minutes away (based on the means of transport they commonly use), and only one in three has no close family members nearby.

TABLE 2.4

Percentage of emancipated adults with non-coresiding blood relatives (parents, siblings and children) who live no more than 30 minutes from their home

	PROVINCE OF BIRTH AND RESIDENCE			SEX		NUMBER OF BLOOD RELATIVES[1]					TOTAL
	SAME	DIFFERENT	IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY	MALE	FEMALE	1	2	3	4	5+	
None	28	38	55	29	34	44	38	34	31	26	32
Some	43	50	37	44	45		24	42	49	63	45
All	29	12	8	27	21	56	38	24	20	11	23
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Note: (1) Not counting the respondent.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The variables that most influence the likelihood of having family close by are migration and family size. Immigrants in particular, but also those

who have gone to live in another province, are most likely to not have any blood relatives living close by. However, the vast majority of Spanish migrants (62%) have a blood relative living nearby. The greater the number of blood relatives, the greater the likelihood of having a family member nearby, but also the greater the likelihood that some family member has migrated.

Taking into consideration different family relationships, it appears that about 60% of people live less than 30 minutes from their parents, parents-in-law, adult children, siblings and brothers or sisters-in-law with whom they do not co-reside, while 50% live less than 15 minutes away. About 20% live more than two hours away (table 2.5). What also stands out is that distance from the different family members is very similar, with the exception of grandparents. The time needed to get to where the latter live is much greater, which may be a reflection of the great migratory movements in Spain during the rural exodus of the 1960s. Most family members, whatever the relationship, therefore live very close to each other, and this enables parents and adult children to live in separate households based on the principle of "intimacy at a distance".

TABLE 2.5

Distance between respondent's home and homes of different types of relatives

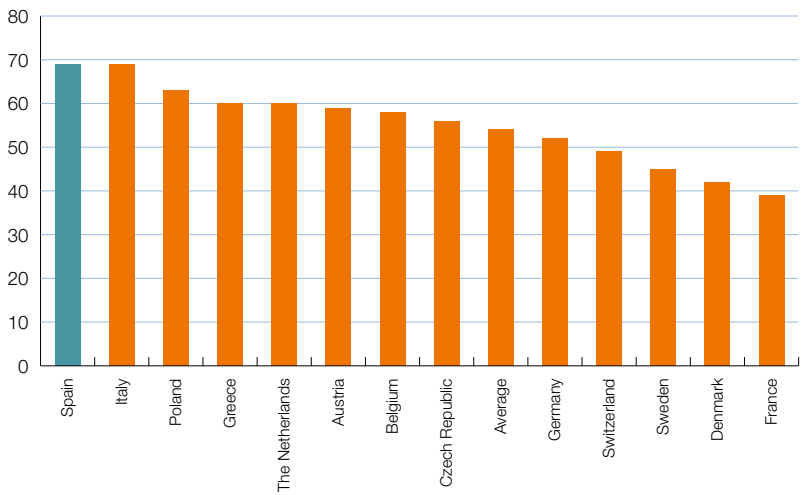
	MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS	PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS	FATHER/ MOTHER	PARENTS-IN-LAW	CLOSEST SON/ DAUGHTER	CLOSEST BROTHER/SISTER	CLOSEST BROTHER-IN-LAW/SISTER-IN-LAW(1)
0 to 5 minutes	10	9	32	22	32	29	22
6 to 15 minutes	12	11	21	21	21	17	20
16 to 30 minutes	13	16	10	16	11	12	18
½ hour to 1 hour	14	14	11	13	14	13	13
1 to 2 hours	4	11	6	5	4	5	6
More than 2 hours	48	38	20	22	17	24	21
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	191	131	576	522	406	1,011	693

Note: (1) Refers to the sibling of the spouse or partner that lives closest. The information refers to the distance in minutes by the most frequently used mode of transport; the table groups the responses according to distance.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The hypothesis that there is a trend towards generations living further away from each other does not seem to be accurate. If we compare the distance between the home of respondents whose parents are living and their parent's home, with the distance separating the home of the respondents who have children and their children's home, there is barely any difference in distance. In other words, although no comparison is specifically made between the distance of the respondent's home with his/her parents' home and the distance with the homes of his/her adult children, we can see that, overall, there is no difference in distance. The process of individualization, therefore, does not seem to lead to generations living further apart; however, when a parent has only one child, the chance of having a child living nearby is less than when there are more children.

GRAPH 2.6

Percentage of parents 50 years of age and older with emancipated children that live less than 5km away



Source: Compiled from data from the Survey on Health, Age and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), 2008, available at www.share-project.org.

Compared with other countries, not only do generations live together longer in Spain because children leave home later and then co-reside more

frequently with their elderly parents, but also when they do not co-reside, a higher percentage live close to each other (less than 5 kilometres) than in the countries of central and northern Europe (graph 2.6). Moreover, this is a pattern common to many countries of southern and eastern Europe. However, if the radius is extended to 25 km, the differences between countries decrease substantially.

2.3. Individualization and structural solidarity

As discussed in the introduction, the process of individualization has led to a sharp decline in the birth-rate. This decline, along with the increase in life expectancy, is radically transforming the structure of family networks.

As parents and parents-in-law live increasingly longer, the likelihood of having living ascendant relatives at more advanced ages is much greater (9% of persons 60 years of age and over have a living parent). Moreover, the proportion of persons who have no children and therefore no grandchildren is increasing. However, the vast majority who are at reproductive ages continue to have children, even though they have fewer, leading to an increasing number of small families. In this sense, most people are part of a kinship structure made up of three generations (62%), and even four generations is not uncommon (20%). Although with a different time frame, there has also been an increase in the proportion of the population without siblings, and those who do have siblings, have fewer. Using the metaphor mentioned earlier, the structure of the kinship network is taking on the form of a "beanpole" in the sense that kinship networks are increasingly characterized by there being more living ascendant relatives and fewer descendants and siblings This trend increases the probability that there will not be women in the networks to take on the roles they have traditionally held (and that they continue to hold), facilitating contact and exchanges of support within the family network.

The process of individualization has also caused a profound change in family dynamics as individual members have greater autonomy to negotiate and renegotiate (implicitly more than explicitly) the terms of family co-existence, which has deeply affected the patterns of co-residency between generations. Contrary to what at first might be expected, this

aspect of individualization has facilitated young adults remaining in the parental home longer, until they are able to become independent without decreasing their levels of consumption. The popular German expression "hotel mama" to describe how young adults use the parental home provides evidence in an ironic but accurate manner of how the norms of co-existence and the structure of power within families have changed.

The emphasis on autonomy has also fostered the residential separation of older generations based on the principle of "intimacy at a distance". Although co-residence of the very elderly with their adult children remains high compared with other countries, individualization has led to a systematic decrease in the percentage of the elderly living with one of their children and an increase in the percentage living alone or with a hired caregiver.

This trend is also encouraged by a pattern of residential proximity between generations, which appears not to have been affected by the process of individualization. Compared with other countries of central and northern Europe, the Spanish family is characterized by a very belated emancipation of young people, a relatively high proportion of elderly parents living with one of their children and high residential proximity among members of the family network. This pattern is shared by other countries in southern and eastern Europe.

III. Family Sociability

The aim of this chapter is to analyse contact among non-coresiding members of the family network. It will address: The frequency of contact among family; the characteristics of this contact and the factors that influence it. Based on the third hypothesis formulated in the introduction, we will also explore to what extent growing individualization and weakening social and family control over individual behaviour has affected family sociability. The following questions will be answered:

- What is the density of relations among different members of the family network? Is there more contact among family members in Spain than in other countries in Europe?
- Do women still occupy a central role in maintaining family networks? If a family does not have daughters, how does this affect intergenerational relationships? Are the elderly who do not have daughters more isolated than those who do?
- What influence does the decrease in the number of children have on the density of intergenerational relationships and social relations between generations in general?
- How has the process of individualization affected the density of relationships among members of the family network?

Providing an answer to these questions is important for several reasons. Through integration into society individuals have access to the resources they need to meet their needs (material, emotional, and for companionship, etc.). On the contrary, social isolation makes it difficult (if not impossible) for individuals to meet those needs. Integration takes place through

different social contexts; one of the most important is the on-going contact with others with whom one shares free time, interests and concerns. Contact with members of this social network provides a sense of belonging and avoids social isolation and is, therefore, very important for an individual's quality of life (Saraceno, Olagnero and Torroni, 2005). However, having contact with members of one's network not only serves to prevent feelings of loneliness and isolation or to provide a way to spend one's free time; regular contact is also the way these bonds are maintained over time. Thanks to regular contact, a sense of belonging is maintained and the foundation for an exchange of different types of support is established (Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Kellerhals *et al*. 1994; Spitze and Logan, 1996). It is, therefore, important to understand patterns of family sociability and how they may have been influenced by social change.

3.1. Methodology

Contact between members of the family network can basically take two forms: face-to-face contact through visits or joint activities, which are usually related to leisure, but can be related to paid work (*e.g.* family businesses) or unpaid work (*e.g.* helping out family members), and contact through communications media, primarily the telephone, but also other forms such as email, letters, online chatting, etc., which are used much less.

To measure the intensity of personal contact, we asked respondents about the frequency of personal contact related to leisure (How often do you see each other and spend time together?). The questions in the survey do not specify response options, but they do code responses on a scale from "daily" to "never". This way of measuring responses, however, generates an overestimation of the frequency of contact. To measure the suitability of this indicator, we asked respondents specifically about people they do not live with and with whom they had spent leisure time on weekends prior to the survey. According to the ERSS 2007, only 37% of those who stated that they saw their mother daily had seen her to "spend time together" on the weekends prior to the survey. Similarly, only 31% of those who stated they saw their siblings daily had done so on recent weekends.

The response was similar regarding contact with emancipated children: 38%. However, asking about people they have seen "on recent weekends" also presents limitations for actually measuring the scope of sociability. On the one hand, there is the problem of selective memory, which in this case may be unimportant, since the time frame is short. On the other hand, there is the tendency to give only one or at most two answers to questions with possibly multiple answers, which in this case tends to minimize the number of contacts of respondents who actually have a relatively varied social life. In the ERSS 2007, 40% reported only one type of contact, and 21% mentioned two; the rest indicated more than two. We do not know to what extent these responses represent a real estimate of the number of persons respondents actually spent part of their available free time with during the weekends in question.

Despite these limitations, asking about the relative frequency of contact can be considered a valid operationalization, if it is not taken literally as the actual effective frequency, but as an indicator of the perceived frequency of contact. In fact, this is the indicator that has been used in specialized studies for a long time to measure the density of social relations, without a more satisfactory operationalization having been found so far (ISSP, 1986; ISSP, 2001; OASIS, 2003; SHARE, 2003; EQLS, 2003 and 2007; GGS, 2006).

To measure the frequency of non-face-to-face contact, respondents were asked about the frequency of phone calls, using the same coding criteria as for visits. Contrary to what might at first be expected, phone calls are generally not a substitute for visits In fact, the more face-to-face contact there is, the more frequent telephone contact there is. However, phone calls also function as a substitute for visits among those who live long distances away from each other. Those who live more than two hours away tend to have frequent telephone contact, more so in intergenerational relationships than between siblings. Such contact serves to maintain ties and a sense of family belonging.

The effects of individualization are also analysed: First, its impact on the structure of the family network – specifically the reduction of family size – leading to the greater likelihood of not having daughters; secondly, through an "individualization index", an indicator which measures

whether norms of family solidarity are weakening (presented in the introduction and discussed in the first chapter). The hypothesis of the deinstitutionalization of family relationships is also examined by analysing the influence of emotional closeness on relational density.

3.2. Characteristics of contact among members of the family network

3.2.1. General characteristics of family sociability

The subjective perception of the frequency of face-to-face contact with non-coresiding family members is very high, as the proportion of people who say they see a family member at least once a week varies between 52% and 85%, depending on the type of relationship. As shown in table 3.1, high frequency of in-person contact occurs with both blood relatives (*e.g.* parents, emancipated children and siblings) and in-laws (*e.g.* parents-in-law and brothers and sisters-in-law), but the perception of frequency of contact with the latter is lower. Contact is more frequent between parents and children than between siblings. In terms of intergenerational contact, parents have more frequent contact with their emancipated children than with their own parents. Contact with grandparents, in contrast, is much more sporadic, even more so than with in-laws, which shows that the most frequent contact is with the respondent's and his or her partner's immediate family. Data available from surveys conducted in other European Union countries, such as those we will look at subsequently, reveal this same pattern, at least in regard to contact between parents, children and siblings.

The fact that contact with emancipated children is more frequent than contact with elderly parents (for those who have both) would seem to indicate a trend toward an increase in intergenerational relational density, contrary to what would be expected based on individualization theory. This trend, however, could be explained by the disappearance of the patriarchal family and the emergence of the negotiating family, which would lead to greater emotional closeness between generations and more personal contact. Based on the information available, the evolution of the relevant indicators shows, however, that there was no significant change in Spain between 1994 and 2007. Thus, in 1994 according to the CIS survey 2.113, 71% of respondents

who were not living with their mothers reported that they saw her at least once a week. In 2001 this figure rose to 74%, according to the ISSP survey (2001), and 74% according to our ERSS survey (2007) as well. However, according to the EQLS, 64% responded in this way both in 2003 and 2007 (in data referring to Spain). Contact with children also did not decline between 2001 and 2007: 85% of respondents stated that they saw their children at least once a week in both years, according to the ISSP survey (2001) and the ERSS survey (2007), and 87% according to EQLS (2007).

TABLE 3.1

Percentage of persons that state they see different members of their network based on frequency of contact (1)

	GRANDPARENTS	FATHER/ MOTHER	PARENTS-IN-LAW	SON/ DAUGHTER	BROTHER/ SISTER	BROTHER/ SISTER-IN-LAW	UNCLES/ AUNTS	COUSINS	FRIENDS
Daily	7	33	16	43	25	13	:	:	:
A few times a week	14	26	20	25	22	21	:	:	:
Once a week	8	14	23	17	13	18	–	–	59
A few times a month	24	12	19	8	18	25	33	36	19
A few times a year	25	10	12	5	13	16	20	18	10
Once a year	10	1	3	–	4	4	19	17	3
Less frequently	6	3	4	–	3	3	16	16	3
Never	7	–	2	–	1	1	13	13	6
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	251	576	563	424	1,013	750	955	1,144	1,178

Note: ":" indicates that this possibility was not included; "-" indicates fewer than five cases. (1) All categories refer to those seen most frequently. When parents or parents-in-law do not live together, due to separation or death, the survey refers to the mother or mother-in-law.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The reason for this difference could be attributed to the "intergenerational stake" hypothesis (Bengtson and Kuypers, 1971), whereby the older generation has a greater stake in the relationship than does the younger generation, and this influences their perceptions. Studies that have been done based on interviews with both parents and their children have shown that parents mention conflict between generations less frequently. They also say they have

closer emotional bonds, more contact and provide more support than is recognized by their children. This response pattern corresponds to a parental propensity to emphasize "our family" (*i.e.* belonging and sharing), while children tend to emphasize difference and independence from parents.

Telephone contact is more frequent than face-to-face contact, as would be imagined. It is also more frequent with emancipated children (93% of parents state that they speak at least once a week with their children) than with parents (83%), and is more frequent with parents than with siblings (66%). Face-to-face contact and telephone contact tend to reinforce each other, especially in regard to relationships between siblings.

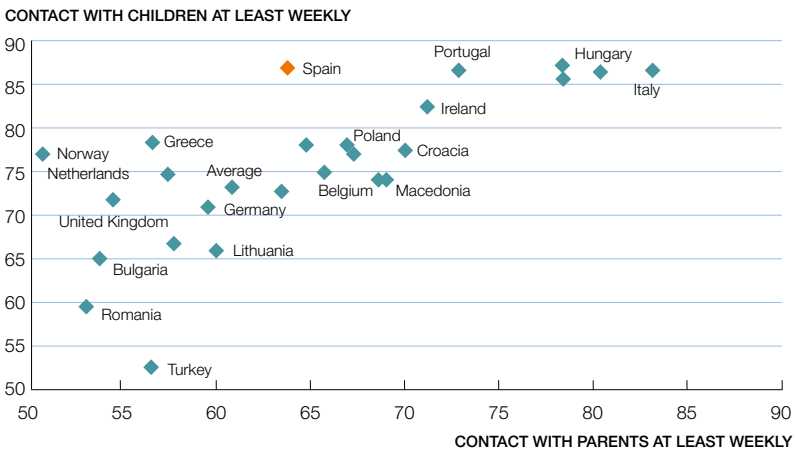
In comparison with other countries, the frequency of contact in Spain – both intergenerational and between siblings – is high, although the relative position depends on the criteria used to measure the intensity of contact among family members. According to the SHARE survey, in which adults 50 and over are interviewed about the frequency of face-to-face or telephone contact with their non-coresiding children, contact is most frequent in the countries of southern Europe (Spain included) and is lowest in the Scandinavian countries, with the countries of central Europe falling in between (Hank, 2007). A similar classification is also obtained from the ISSP Social Survey Networks II (2001) (Murphy, 2008). If we look at the OASIS survey, which involved a small number of countries, we see the same phenomenon in relationships between parents and emancipated children (Lowenstein and Ogg, 2003). However, the EQLS survey (2007), whose sample universe is the entire adult population and includes face-to-face contact with emancipated children as well as with parents and siblings, reveals that the frequency of intergenerational contact (*i.e.* when considering both contact with parents and with emancipated children) does not present such a clear north-south pattern.

In graph 3.1, we have combined the responses on perceptions of contact with emancipated children and with parents for the 27 European Union countries, plus the three candidate countries included in the survey; the horizontal axis shows contact with parents, and the vertical axis shows contact with emancipated children. From this graph we can see, first of all, that the intergenerational stake hypothesis seems to be supported in all countries, as they are all above the bisector. Secondly, there is a wide variation in the

intensity of contact, but there is also a strong correlation between the contact that younger emancipated generations have with their parents and the contact the older generations have with their emancipated children. This is evidence that Reher's typology (1998) of "strong family countries" and "weak family countries" are two poles on a continuum in this dimension of family life. Third, if one considers only the contact parents state they have with their children, the density of contact in Spain is among the highest, following the north-south pattern in Europe pointed out by Kohli and his collaborators. However, this is not the case if one considers the contact children state they have with their parents. The "intergenerational stake" in Spain is among the highest, and if you combine both perspectives, the north-south pattern is considerably blurred; the density of intergenerational relationships in Spain then occupies an intermediary position between those countries with higher density (*i.e.* Malta, Italy, Portugal, Cyprus, Ireland, Hungary) and those with lower density (*i.e.* Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Romania and Bulgaria).

GRAPH 3.1

Percentage of persons in European countries that state that they see their parents or emancipated children at least once a week



Source: Compiled from data from the European Quality of Life Survey, 2007. Adjusted data.

If we also consider contact between siblings, we can classify countries according to the density of personal contact individuals have with their nearest

blood relatives. Doing a cluster analysis based on the indicator of the percentage of individuals who say they see the different categories of family members at least once a week, we can see that, regardless of the criteria established for classification, the density of contact in Spain is in an intermediate position. Table 3.2 shows a typology of three groups: The first includes countries with a high relative density in the three types of family ties and is composed of certain Mediterranean and eastern European countries; the third group, which has the least relative density of personal contact, is composed of a heterogeneous group of countries of central and northern Europe, along with Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey; and the second group, with an intermediate level of intensity, includes countries of central, eastern and southern Europe. Overall, therefore, the north/central/south gradient regarding the intensity of family sociability oversimplifies the diversity existing in Europe and overestimates the intensity of relational solidarity in Spain.

TABLE 3.2

Classification of European countries based on frequency of face-to-face contact with parents, children and siblings

GROUP 1: MEDIUM-HIGH RELATIONAL DENSITY	GROUP 2: MEDIUM RELATIONAL DENSITY	GROUP 3: MEDIUM-LOW RELATIONAL DENSITY	
Slovenia	Austria	Norway	Germany
Hungary	Belgium	Finland	The Netherlands
Ireland	Czech Republic	Sweden	Luxembourg
Portugal	Poland	Denmark	Romania
Italy	Slovakia	Estonia	Bulgaria
Cyprus	Croatia	Lithuania	Turkey
Malta	Macedonia	Latvia	
	Greece	United Kingdom	
	Spain	France	

Note: In group 1 the average percentage of persons that see their father/mother at least once a week is of 79%; their emancipated children, 88%, and brothers/sisters, 59%. In group 2 it is 66%, 78% and 46% respectively, and in group 3, it is 53%, 67% and 35%. The percentages for Spain are 64%, 87% and 53%.
Source: Compiled from data from the EQLS survey (2007). Adjusted data.

In Spain, the frequency of face-to-face contact is not as high as is often stated, which is also demonstrated by the indicator that we discussed in the previous section, namely, who respondents had spent some leisure time with during

recent weekends. According to our ERSS survey (2007), "only" 59% of respondents said they had seen a family member on recent weekends, including in that category all types of family members (blood relatives and in-laws). The proportion of those who said they had seen their grandparents was 3%; parents, 31%; parents-in-law, 20%; emancipated children, 40%, and siblings, 22%. The percentage who reported having seen friends was much higher: 51%.

3.2.2. Individualization and contact with parents

As noted earlier, the perceived frequency of contact with non-coresiding parents is very high, and there is no evidence that this is in decline. If parents are divorced, spending time in-person with the father is less frequent than with the mother, something which is also found in other countries (Fokkema *et al*., 2008). In fact, there is a high percentage of respondents who never see their separated/divorced father, or do so only sporadically (58% report seeing him at most a few times a year). This is a reflection of the frequent distancing between fathers and children after divorce. And even when contact is not lost, it is generally infrequent, whether in-person or by telephone. It is conceivable that the frequency of contact depends on the circumstances of the divorce as well as on the age at which it occurred, but we lack sufficient data to analyse this.

The frequency of contact that respondents stated they had with parents depends on the sex of the respondent; women have more contact with their parents (and especially with their mothers) than do men, a result widely documented in the literature (Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Meil, 2002; Bielby, 2006; Fokkema *et al*., 2008). Thus, 36% of women compared to 27% of men state that they saw their mother/parents at the weekend, and 55% of women compared to 37% of men say they talk with their parents on the phone daily. In addition, telephone contact is initiated more frequently by women, whether it is daughters (34% compared to 23% of sons who say they usually phone) or mothers (9% of daughters say it is usually the mother who calls versus 24% in the case of sons). The process of individualization and the corresponding redefinition of the social and family roles of women have not resulted, therefore, in a loss of women's traditional role as *kin keepers* in the family network.

The intensity of contact with parents depends on multiple factors in addition to gender. Table 3.3 shows the results of a linear regression analysis on the

frequency of contact of men and women with their parents, according to different personal circumstances of both the parents and children identified in the literature as important (for a review, see Hank, 2007). Special attention has been paid to the effects of individualization. The figures shown in the table are standardized beta coefficients, which, on a scale of 0 to 1, measure the intensity of explanatory variables: the higher the coefficient, the greater the explanatory power.[1] The main conclusions of this analysis are the following:

TABLE 3.3

Impact of different circumstances on the frequency of face-to-face and telephone contact with parents: Beta coefficients and levels of significance of the linear regression analysis

	VISITS			TELEPHONE CONTACT		
	BOTH SEXES	MALES	FEMALES	BOTH SEXES	MALES	FEMALES
Respondent's characteristics						
Sex: female	0.10**			0.10*		
Has a sister(s)	–0.03	–0.05	0.00	–0.04	–0.03	–0.01
Has a sibling	–0.02	–0.07	–0.01	0.06	–0.07	0.11
Has two siblings	0.01	0.05	–0.03	0.08	–0.04	0.12
Has three or more siblings	–0.08	–0.02	–0.14	0.11	–0.02	0.16
Individualization index	–0.12***	–0.11*	–0.12**	0.01	–0.03	0.04
Has paid work	0.07**	0.13*	0.05	0.03	0.12	–0.01
Has a partner	0.00	–0.04	0.02	0.00	–0.03	0.01
Has children	0.00	–0.10	0.05	–0.02	–0.03	–0.02
Social class	0.07*	0.10	0.05	0.12**	0.18*	0.09
Characteristics of parents						
Distance to parents' home	–0.64***	–0.63***	–0.63***	0.15***	0.07	0.18***
Emotional closeness	0.16***	0.16**	0.15	0.15***	0.08	0.18***
Mother's age	0.01	0.06	–0.01	–0.19***	–0.20*	–0.17**
Living parents	0.04	–0.01	0.05	0.03	–0.03	0.06
Number of cases	554	206	347	552	205	346
r2	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.13	0.13	0.13

* Level of significance p≤ 0.05, ** level of significance p≤0.01, *** level of significance p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

(1) Asterisks represent the risk of error in asserting that there is a statistically significant relationship, when in fact there is not. A 5% or less margin of error is acceptable, but less than 10% is also acceptable.

As shown by the size of the beta coefficient, the variable that best explains the difference in the intensity of contact is the geographical distance that separates non-coresiding generations, so that the greater the distance, the less frequent is the contact, a result widely documented in the research (Kellerhals *et al.* 1994; Spitze and Logan, 1996; Szydlik, 2000, among many others). This is the case not only in regard to face-to-face contact, but also telephone contact, at least in the case of women with their parents.

The intensity of intergenerational contact, whether in-person or by telephone, reveals a certain degree of variation depending on social class, but not in the sense that might be expected: Greater relational density among the working class (Pitrou, 1978; Hank, 2007). On the contrary, intensity of contact is higher among better-off classes than among lower classes.

The age of the parents does not affect the frequency of face-to-face contact, but it has a notable effect on telephone contact; the older the parent, the less frequent the telephone contact, both for men and women. In fact, age is the variable that most explains the variability in the frequency of contact by phone. Its impact is primarily seen in an increase in the time between calls, but given that face-to-face contact does not decrease with age, this does not mean the loss of relationships in later life.

Regarding the impact of individualization, it can be seen that reduced family size (measured here by number of siblings) does not influence the frequency of in-person or telephone contact with parents. Having or not having sisters is also not an influence on frequency of contact. In other words, there is no "compensation effect" (Logan and Spitze, 1996) in the children of small families compared to those of large families; thus, children without siblings do not have more frequent contact to prevent the possible social isolation of their parents. This is also observed if we look at visits on weekends: 27% of those without siblings spent time with their parents compared to 32% of those with siblings. From the standpoint of parents, this means that there will be less intergenerational contact in small families. In contrast to what would be assumed, however, parents with fewer children do not report less contact with their children than parents of large families, as will be discussed in the following section.

The weakening of norms of mutual support, reflected in the individualization index, results in in-person contact being more spaced apart, but not telephone contact. The questioning of traditional norms of solidarity leads, therefore, to greater detachment and less intensity in relationships. However, this does not represent a rejection or a rupture of relationships, but a redefinition of the terms of the relationship in which telephone contact becomes more prevalent. This detachment does not exclude, however, regular contact with parents. Since the weakening of such norms is not very widespread, as was seen in chapter 2, the impact is limited.

Frequency of contact also depends on the emotional closeness between the generations; the greater the degree of emotional closeness, the greater the frequency of both in-person and telephone contact. The explanatory power of this variable, as shown by the value of the beta coefficient, is just one fourth that of the variable for geographic distance, but it has a greater explanatory power than sex. The high relative importance of emotional closeness as a factor in the intensity of intergenerational contact indicates – according to our hypothesis and interpretation – that in the context of individualization, the social regulation (*i.e.* the institutional component) of intergenerational relationships loses importance, while subjective affinity gains importance. However, even if the different generations do not get along, this does not mean contact is broken off, but rather that there is more time between visits, except in the case of divorced fathers, in which case a complete rupture of contact is more common.

3.2.3. Individualization and contact with emancipated children

As we have seen, the perception of frequency of contact with non-coresiding children is very high, and there is no sign of a decrease. To analyse the factors that contact with children depends on, we have carried out the same type of linear regression analysis as for contact with parents (table 3.4). The main conclusions drawn from this analysis are the following:

The impact of geographical distance on the density of contact is consistent with that obtained in the analysis of contact with parents, as the beta coefficients are very similar both for in-person and telephone contact. This demonstrates the consistency of the results.

Social class is significant only in the case of telephone contact, although in terms of face-to-face contact, the results point in the same direction; the higher the social class, the greater the contact. Regarding the effects of reduced family size, the results are not fully consistent with those obtained in the analysis of relationships with parents. Thus it appears that there is less face-to-face contact between parents and the oldest child in families with three or more children than in families with two children, and there is less contact with older children than with an only child (beta coefficients negative and statistically significant); this effect, however, does not appear for contact declared by second and third children. But the fact that the beta coefficient for the influence of geographical distance increases for the second and third children also points in that direction. In other words, when there are more children, it seems that face-to-face contact (but not telephone contact) is less frequent with each of them than when the family is smaller. This effect, as already indicated, was not observed in the analysis of contact with parents. In any case, the assumption would be that the greater the number of children the more likely it will be that parents will see some of them and the greater will be the relational density. This hypothesis, however, does not seem to be verified. If instead of considering the indicator for the intensity of perceived contact, we examine the likelihood of a parent having seen an emancipated child during the weekend, in function of the number of children, it shows that this does not vary based on the number of children (controlling for the distance of the nearest child). The percentage of parents who said they had seen a son or daughter during the past weekend is 36% for those with one child, 40% if they have two, and 41% for three or more. This difference is not statistically significant. Consequently, reduced family size should not lead to a reduction in relational intensity.

The sex of the child has some influence on the frequency of in-person contact, not having a daughter meaning less frequent contact. However, the impact is not great and is not found among all children in the family (see table 3.4). An analysis of the indicator of persons seen during the weekend reveals no statistically significant differences based on whether parents have a daughter or not (41% of parents with a daughter and 37% of those without state they had seen a child during the weekend). Therefore, the increase in the likelihood of not having a daughter, as a result of

having fewer children, does not seem to translate into a reduction of relational density.

TABLE 3.4

Impact of different circumstances on the frequency of face-to-face and telephone contact with children: Beta coefficients and levels of significance of the linear regression analysis

	FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT			TELEPHONE CONTACT		
	ELDEST CHILD	SECOND CHILD	THIRD CHILD	ELDEST CHILD	SECOND CHILD	THIRD CHILD
Respondent's characteristics						
Sex: female	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.10*	0.09	0.03
Age	–0.07	–0.09	–0.15*	–0.06	–0.03	–0.11
Has two children	–0.06	–	–	0.06	–	–
Has three children	–0.13*	–0.05	–	0.03	–0.03	–
Has four or more children	–0.14**	–0.06	–0.04	–0.11	–0.16**	–0.04
Social class	0.02	–0.04	0.07	0.15***	0.09	0.11
Separated/divorced	–0.11**	–0.12**	–0.10	–0.02	–0.05	0.03
Widow/widower	0.03	–0.03	0.05	0.05	0.00	0.12
Emotional closeness	0.20***	0.20***	0.12*	0.17***	0.22***	0.09
Individualization index	–0.06	–0.07	–0.06	–0.05	–0.05	–0.03
Characteristics of the son/daughter						
Sex of the child: female	0.08*	–0.06	0.14*	0.01	0.11*	0.14
Has grandchildren	–0.05	–0.05	0.00	–0.05	0.05	0.01
Son/daughter is married or co-habiting	0.08*	0.00	0.13*	–0.01	0.13*	0.15
Distance between the homes	–0.53***	–0.60***	–0.69***	0.16***	0.13**	0.15
r2	0.38	0.44	0.53	0.11	0.14	0.08
Number of cases	448	330	159	448	330	159

Level of significance p≤ 0.05, ** level of significance p≤0.01, *** level of significance p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The degree of identification with the norms of intergenerational solidarity does not affect the frequency of contact with children, unlike what was found in the analysis of contact with parents, where this factor is significant. This is partly because very few parents with emancipated children reject

such norms and, moreover, because parents generally promote contact with their children.

Finally, emotional closeness is important in regard to the density of contacts – face-to-face or by telephone – such that the lower the level of emotional closeness, the less frequent the contact and the lower the density of relations. The coefficients that measure the intensity of this effect are very similar to contact with parents, and they are second in intensity – after geographical proximity – in explaining the degree of intensity of contact.

3.2.4. Contact with siblings

In-person contact between siblings is also high, as already pointed out, and depends in principle on the same factors as intergenerational relationships; *i.e.*, mainly geographical distance and emotional closeness. To analyse the impact of various factors, we did the same type of statistical analysis; the results are found in table 3.5. The main conclusions are the following:

As with intergenerational contact, women are more active than men in maintaining relationships between siblings, which demonstrates their central role in family networks as *kin keepers*. They have maintained this role despite the profound changes in gender roles. Contact between sisters is far more frequent than that between siblings of the opposite sex or between brothers. This more frequent contact is, on the one hand, due to greater (declared) emotional closeness between sisters and, secondly, to their central role in maintaining relationships within the family network. Around 49% of the women interviewed see one of their sisters at least once a week, and about 70% of them phone weekly. The proportion of those who see or phone a brother is around 39% and 51%, respectively.

The proportion of brothers who see each other or talk on the phone weekly is about 39% and 36%, respectively. These percentages refer to contact with an older brother or sister, but if they have more siblings, the percentages are similar and the patterns the same. Analysis of the persons they had seen the previous weekend also demonstrates that contact with sisters on the part of women is more frequent than in the case of men.

The number of siblings also determines the frequency of contact; more siblings means less individual contact with each of them, whether in-person or by telephone. Reduced family size would not necessarily, therefore, decrease the intensity of contact with siblings, but having more siblings, an individual is more likely to see one of them. Data on persons they had seen the weekends prior to the survey demonstrates, however, that the fewer the siblings, the lower the frequency of contact; the percentage of those who had seen a sibling on the weekend went from 21% for those who only have one sibling to 27% among those with two siblings, and 33% among those with more than two. To this we must add the fact that not having sisters also decreases the frequency of contact. Reduced family size, therefore, affects sociability among siblings.

The weakening of the norms of family solidarity also tends to reduce the frequency of face-to-face contact, but not telephone contact, as we also saw in the case of relationships with parents.

Emotional closeness also significantly influences the frequency of contact among siblings, both in-person and by telephone, and has a much stronger effect than in the case of intergenerational relationships. The fact that geographic distance plays such a prominent role in sociability among siblings and, in fact, even more than the affinity between them – beta coefficients for the former hover around 0.5, whereas for the latter they are around 0.3 – shows that blood ties still weigh heavily on sociability.

Although for the vast majority of people, blood ties continue to dictate the need to maintain some degree of contact with siblings, affinity – conditioned by distance – acquires a central role in the intensity of these relationships and in siblings participating in activities together beyond the usual family rituals (*e.g.* birthdays, holidays and other celebrations). In this sense, relationships with siblings may become more like friendships than intergenerational family relationships. In fact, they have a status somewhere between kinship and friendship (Connidis, 2001).

Social class does not affect the frequency of face-to-face contact, although telephone contact is more frequent with rising social status. This is consistent with the results we found for intergenerational relationships.

Lastly, face-to-face contact tends to be less frequent as siblings age, although telephone contact does not follow this same trend. As individuals advance in the family cycle, and when the parents die, contact among siblings is less frequent, above all when the motive for contact has less to do with emotional closeness and common interests, and more to do with kinship ties and the unifying role of the parents. Siblings, thus, no longer occupy a privileged place in family relationships once intergenerational relationships lose their centrality, whether because of the parents' death or because of the emancipation of children. In this regard, siblings do not appear to play a central role in the social relations of the elderly, except in certain circumstances.

TABLE 3.5

Impact of different circumstances on the frequency of face-to-face and telephone contact among siblings: Beta coefficients and levels of significance of the linear regression analysis

	FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT			TELEPHONE CONTACT		
	ELDEST SIBLING	SECOND SIBLING	THIRD SIBLING	ELDEST SIBLING	SECOND SIBLING	THIRD SIBLING
Respondent's characteristics						
Sex: female	–0.01	0.01	0.00	0.16***	0.14***	0.10*
Age	–0.19***	–0.17***	–0.12**	–0.06	–0.02	0.00
Number of siblings	–0.07**	–0.06*	–0.09*	–0.06*	–0.11**	–0.13**
Social class	0.03	0.04	–0.07	0.13***	0.14***	–0.01
Lives with a partner or is married	–0.03	–0.03	–0.02	0.00	–0.02	0.04
Has children	0.01	0.03	0.00	–0.07*	–0.07+	–0.11*
Emotional closeness	0.32***	0.34***	0.22***	0.36***	0.34***	0.28***
Individualization index	–0.04	–0.06*	–0.08*	0.06*	0.01	0.04
Characteristics of the sibling						
Sex of the sibling: female	0.07**	0.04	0.03	0.08**	0.11**	0.09+
The sibling has a partner	–0.02	–0.03	–0.05	0.01	0.01	0.09
Distance between homes	–0.51***	–0.53***	–0.53***	0.10**	0.11**	0.02
r2	0.45	0.45	0.39	0.21	0.21	0.15
Number of cases	958	649	379	958	649	379

* Level of significance p≤ 0.05, ** level of significance p≤0.01, *** level of significance p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

3.3. Friendships and family relationships

Another aspect of sociability to be analysed in this context is the predominance of family relationships over relationships with friends, and under what circumstances this occurs. It is also interesting to look at whether the trend towards smaller families and individualization tends to increase the importance of friendship networks compared to family networks in the organization of free time. To explore this question, respondents were asked to assess who they spend more free time with: Family, friends or both equally.

The answer appears in table 3.6, which shows that respondents generally spend more free time with family than with friends; however, this does not mean they do not see friends. A higher proportion of younger adults (between 18 and 39 years of age) say they spend equal amounts of free time with friends and family. As individuals age, the proportion of both men and women who spend their free time predominantly in the company of family increases, above all among men.

TABLE 3.6

Percentage of persons according to whether they spend more free time with family or with friends, by sex and age of respondent

	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Males				
More with non-coresiding family	53	76	84	68
Approximately the same	13	9	4	10
More with friends	34	15	12	22
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**
Females				
More with non-coresiding family	61	68	76	67
Approximately the same	16	8	10	12
More with friends	23	24	14	21
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**

Note: Gamma (males) = –0.46 $p \leq 0.001$; gamma (females) = 0.13 $p \leq 0.05$.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007.

In addition to age, family situation also has a significant influence on whether free time is predominantly spent with the family or not, as shown in table 3.7. The presence of children leads to greater contact with family, especially when the children are young, as spending time with their grandparents is seen by their parents as particularly important. Spending time with grandparents is also important when the children are older and emancipated because contact with adult grandchildren occupies a privileged place in the social life of the elderly. Having a spouse or partner also has an impact on the importance of family in the use of free time, although in a much more limited way. Thus, while only one out of three people (36%) without children or a partner point to the family as the main group they spend their free time with, this is the case for half of those with a partner but no children, and more than two thirds of those who have children.

TABLE 3.7

Percentage of persons according to whether they spend more free time with family or with friends, by family situation of the respondent

	WITHOUT A PARTNER WITHOUT CHILDREN	WITHOUT A PARTNER WITH CHILDREN	WITH A PARTNER AND CHILDREN	WITH A PARTNER WITHOUT CHILDREN	TOTAL
More with non-coresiding family	36	65	78	54	68
Approximately the same	23	10	7	13	11
More with friends	41	25	15	33	22
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	119	120	781	121	1,200

Contingency coefficient = 0.31 $p \leq 0.001$.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Who individuals spend free time with is also influenced by the number of members in their family network as well as the number of friends they have, albeit to a lesser degree. Thus, the more siblings an individual has and the more family members in general, the greater the likelihood of spending more time with family; however, the greater the number of close friends, if they live nearby, the greater the likelihood that they will see friends as often as family or spend more time with friends. The trend towards smaller families, therefore, promotes greater sociability with

friends, as does increasing individualization, because the more the traditional norms of family solidarity are questioned, the less likely it is that free time will be centred on the family. Social class and size of the municipality of residence do not have any influence.

Family members who respondents see most often in their free time are mostly relatives through the female line, given the central role of women as *kin keepers*, regardless of whether they have children. Thus, nearly two out of three women (61%) compared to one out of three men (39%) acknowledge that they meet up with blood relatives more often than with in-laws in their free time, as shown in table 3.8.

TABLE 3.8

With whom would you say you spend more free time? Respondents with a partner/spouse, by sex and age of respondent: In percentages

	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Males				
More with blood relatives	47	39	29	39
Approximately the same	21	25	37	26
More with partner's family	32	37	33	34
No answer	–	–	1	0
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Females				
More with blood relatives	61	61	60	61
Approximately the same	22	21	19	21
More with partner's family	17	16	18	17
No answer	1	1	3	1
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Note: "-" indicates fewer than five cases. Contingency coefficient (sex) = 0.24 p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007.

3.4. Individualization and family sociability

In summary, we find that sociability within the network is high, both in regard to face-to-face contact as well as by telephone. Thus, regarding family members with whom they do not live, 73% of those surveyed state they see parents; 59%, parents-in-law; 85%, children; 60%, siblings; and

60%, siblings of their spouse. Telephone contact is even more prevalent than in-person contact. However, using the indicator of persons respondents had seen in recent weekends, contact with different members of the non-coresiding network is much less intense and less family oriented: 59% report having seen family, which means that 41% have not seen any family member, despite generally having a broad network living nearby, as we saw in the previous chapter. The percentage who got together with friends is also limited, accounting for 51%; only 8% said they had not spent free time on the weekend with anyone in their network (with whom they do not live).

Although it is possible to spend free time with both friends and family, one tends to take precedence over the other at different stages of the family cycle. The older a person is, the greater the contact with family. This is mainly a result of forming a family and having children. When emancipated adults become parents, they see their own parents more often because grandparents want to spend time with their grandchildren, but also because their parents may help out in looking after their grandchildren. Seeing parents, it is also common to see siblings, who usually are in more or less the same stage of the life cycle. This does not mean that friendships disappear with the formation of a family, but that contact with friends tends to become less frequent than with family. In fact, while the proportion that states they have seen friends during the past weekend declines with age, contact with a family member is not significantly affected by age.

In comparing Spain with other countries, the relative density of family sociability depends on the indicators and the sources of data used. If we consider only the perception that parents have regarding contact with their emancipated children, the density of intergenerational contact is among the highest in Europe. However, if the perspective is broadened to consider the point of view of the children or contact between siblings, the density of family contact in Spain is much less intense. Nevertheless, as is the case in other developed countries, there is no sign of a weakening of family sociability, at least since data have been available (since the mid-1990s), a period during which there have been profound changes in other dimensions of family life.

The primary role of women in family networks does not seem to have changed with the process of individualization and the corresponding redefinition of their social and family roles; they continue to have more frequent contact with family than do men, with the differences being greater in telephone contact than in face-to-face contact. Women talk more often on the phone with their parents, with their adult children and with their siblings. In regard to face-to-face contact, differences by gender depend on the type of family relationship and marital status, as well as on the indicator used to measure contact. Face-to-face contact with parents is, thus, more common among women than among men, no matter which indicator is used. Women also report having spent time with one of their siblings at the weekend more often than men, but there are no significant differences in subjective perceptions of frequency of face-to-face contact The frequency of face-to-face contact with children depends primarily on marital status; separated/divorced fathers see their emancipated children less than separated/divorced mothers, but there is no difference by gender for other marital statuses (*e.g.* married or widowed). This is the case regardless of the indicator used to measure contact. Overall, 64% of women say they have seen a non-coresiding family member during the past weekend, whereas in the case of men the proportion is 54%. Men, in contrast, see friends more often than do women (57% compared to 48%).

The loss of social control over individual life projects and increased autonomy in making personal choices – what is known as "individualization" – does not seem to have translated into a weakening of family sociability, given the high frequency of contact individuals continue to have with immediate family. In fact, as noted above, in reference to Austria, Germany, the UK, the US and Italy, based on comparative data from 1986 and 2001, there was no reduction in face-to-face contact, while telephone contact even increased in regard to reported contact with parents, emancipated children and siblings (Kalmijn and De Vries, 2009). Other consequences of increasing individualization such as not having a partner, or mothers working outside the home, are also not associated with a weakening of sociability with parents, children or siblings. Therefore, in principle, it does not seem that changes in the family in the recent past – which can be understood through the concept of individualization – have brought about a weakening of family sociability.

According to several waves of the World Values Survey, the vast majority of the population believes that "Regardless of what the qualities and faults of one's parents are, one must always love and respect them" (79% in 1990 and 88% in 2000). Only a minority – which has also declined between 1990 and 2000 – believes that "One does not have the duty to respect and love parents who have not earned it by their behaviour and attitudes" (21% and 12%). However, the frequency of intergenerational relationships and even more so, of relationships with siblings, both in regard to face-to-face contact and contact by telephone, are conditioned to a large degree by the level of emotional closeness between individuals; in fact, after geographical distance, this is the variable which has the most influence on frequency of contact. According to our interpretation, despite the highly normative nature of intergenerational relations, the social regulation of family relations has lost importance, while subjective affinity has become more important; therefore, there is greater autonomy in deciding who one interacts and shares free time with. This does not mean that intergenerational contact disappears when there is not emotional closeness, but that it becomes more sporadic.

Our interpretation is that the process of individualization has led to a decrease in the importance of the institutional dimension of family sociability and a corresponding increase in the importance of the dimension of choice. This means that members of the family network have to invest time, energy and social skills in order to maintain family sociability – if they so desire. If this interpretation is correct and if family sociability is high, as has been indicated, this is due not so much to the supposed "strength" of family ties, but to the results of such efforts. The logic of the development of the negotiating family – which emerged with the questioning of traditional gender roles – has, therefore, spread not only from parents to children (Meil, 2006), but beyond the borders of the home to also include members of the non-coresiding family network. In other words, the deinstitutionalization of the family, stemming from individualization – which has led to the emergence of the negotiating family, and with that, the need for partners to invest more time and energy into maintaining a common life project in order to avoid separation – has also spread to relations in the kinship network, which also require more time and effort to be maintained.

IV. Exchange of support in personal services

Geographic proximity and frequent contact lead to requests for support from other persons to resolve problems in daily life. As we have seen in chapter 1, the social network functions as a form of reserve social capital, which can be activated to resolve problems depending on circumstances and needs. The type of support that can be obtained from the family network is quite broad, ranging from a sense of belonging to a community that functions based on ascriptive and particularistic values (in contrast to the impersonal values that govern in the market or institutions), to benefits that are provided without any compensation in the form of money or services, as well as to other things such as the inheritance of property or other assets.

In this chapter we analyse the scope and characteristics of support in the form of personal services exchanged among members of the social network of the individuals interviewed, while in the next chapter we will focus on the financial support provided and received. Given its importance in society, support in caring for children as part of strategies to balance work and family life will be analysed separately, considering it from both the perspective of those who receive it and from those who provide it. The dimensions we focus on in this section are: Analysis of the structure and characteristics of the exchange of support in services; a comparison of the scope of support with other European countries and an analysis of how the process of individualization affects the frequency of support. The questions we wish to answer are the following:

- How many families receive support and what type of support do they receive?

- How often do they receive support?
- From whom do they receive it?
- What family and social circumstances favour the reception of support?
- Who provides support and what type of support do they provide?
- To whom do they provide support?
- Are exchanges of support among network members in Spain more frequent and more intensive than in other European countries?
- What effects does the process of individualization have on patterns of support in services?
- What consequences does the reduction of the size of the family have on the likelihood of receiving support?

4.1. Support received

4.1.1. Support in looking after children

The majority of families with under-age children state that they receive some type of support in looking after their children. The younger the children are, the more frequent this support is (table 4.1). Thus, two out of three families with children between 0 and 2 years of age receive support, and more than one out of two when the children are at pre-school age (3 to 6 years of age), and even one out of three when the children are already at school age (7 to 13 years of age). In the vast majority of cases, this is unpaid assistance provided by members of the family or friendship network, although 10% of these families also pay for support in raising their children, without great differences based on the phase of the family life cycle. It must be highlighted that results show there are no significant differences by sex; this is probably because respondents are not evaluating support given to individuals but to households (to the couple in the case of two-parent families).

Getting assistance with childcare – regardless of the frequency of such support – is common throughout society, whether in rural areas, small cities or large metropolitan areas, or whether or not both parents work.

Single-parent families do not indicate that they receive support more often than two-parent families.

TABLE 4.1

In the last 12 months, have you received help in looking after your children from people with whom you do not live, either occasionally or regularly, either paid or unpaid? Percentage of those interviewed with children under 14 years of age, by age of youngest child

	0 TO 2	3 TO 6	7 TO 13	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN
Does not receive support	36	46	74	53	57	48
Pays for it	4	6	4	4	2	7
Does not pay or it	54	40	19	37	34	40
Paying and not paying	6	8	3	6	6	5
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	112	119	126	357	173	185

Contingency coefficient by age = 0.32 $p \leq 0.001$.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

However, among higher socio-economic classes it is more common to pay for help or to combine it with family support, while unpaid support is more prevalent among lower socio-economic classes. The high degree of social homogeneity in receiving support with childcare is due to its being used for balancing work and family life as well as for couples to enjoy independent leisure time. In reality, unpaid support can take diverse forms and involves very different levels of investment in time, as it can range from grandparents looking after the baby at home while the parents work to friends looking after the children while the parents go out on a Saturday night.

Table 4.2 shows that the support received – paid or unpaid – varies greatly in terms of time and frequency, although, in general, the younger the age of the children, the greater the frequency and intensity of unpaid support. No significant differences are revealed in the responses provided by men and women. As can be seen, unpaid support is very important for many families with small children, as almost one out of four (23%) receive help more than 20 hours a week, and another 8% between 10 and 20 hours per

week. When the children begin schooling, the need for support is less frequent; hence the proportion that receives significant support in terms of time decreases by one half, and the majority of families only receive occasional support when circumstances require it. When the children are older, and particularly if they have older siblings that can help in their care (generally staying with them until the parents get home from work or accompanying them to and from school), the frequency of support received decreases even more and is more sporadic. In any case, when both parents work outside the home it is typical to receive support more often than when only one parent does. This also means that families with higher levels of income receive support more often, both because they need it and because they can pay for it. The size of municipality of residence has no impact on these practices.

TABLE 4.2

Percentage of parents with children under 14 years of age that state they receive unpaid support from their social network, by age of the youngest child

	0 TO 2	3 TO 6	7 TO 13	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN
Does not receive support	36	46	74	52	57	48
Occasionally/ sometimes	18	17	10	15	11	18
Less than 10 hours a week	14	22	9	15	15	15
From 10 to 19 hours a week	8	4	–	5	5	5
20 or more hours a week	23	12	6	13	12	15
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	112	119	126	357	173	185

Note: "-" indicates fewer than five cases. Contingency coefficient by age = 0.35 $p \leq 0.001$.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The type of help received is as varied as are the activities of educating and caring for a child (table 4.3). There is no single type of support that clearly predominates, although looking after small children during school vacations is less frequent than other types of care. The type of support

tends to essentially depend on the amount of time involved. If the support is occasional, it can take many different forms, but, in regard to young children, it most often takes the form of providing them with meals or accompanying them to and from school or day-care. When the children are older, the most common assistance is staying with them on school holidays or occasionally taking them back and forth to school. When support involves a lot of time, it tends to be because the children are very young, and it includes almost all the activities mentioned.

TABLE 4.3

Types of unpaid support received by parents with children under 14 years of age from their social network: Percentage of total parents (that receive support or not) who state they receive each type of support, by age of the youngest child

	0 TO 2	3 TO 6	7 TO 13	TOTAL
Taking the child to school or daycare	28	34	15	**26**
Preparing meals for the child	45	29	12	**28**
Taking the child to the park or for a walk	41	36	14	**29**
Looking after them when they are sick	41	26	10	**25**
Looking after them when they are out of school	38	36	18	**30**
Staying with them until the parents get home from work	46	35	16	**32**
Staying with them on school holidays	29	23	16	**32**
Number of cases	101	99	119	**319**

Note: The difference up to 100 for each percentage is the percentage of parents that do not receive this type of help.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

As can be seen in table 4.4, support received comes from different individuals in the network with the average number of persons mentioned being two. In this regard, although grandparents occupy a central place in the "solidarity economy", they are not the only individuals that provide this type of support.

Nevertheless, parents and parents-in-law are the most frequent providers of this support, as three out of four individuals interviewed stated that they receive support from their parents (70%), and slightly over one out of

three from their parents-in-law (35%). If all families with children under 14 years of age are considered (including those that state that they receive no support), the percentage declines to 34% and 18% respectively, and it is higher when the children are younger. In fact, support is concentrated above all in families with small children (45% from parents and 26% from parents-in-law when there are children under six years of age in the family, and 13% and 5% respectively, when the children are six years of age or older). In total, half (52%) of parents of children six years of age or under receive support from grandparents from one side of the family or the other. It should be noted that there are no differences based on sex. Whether it is the father or the mother who benefits from the support, those who provide it are primarily parents and not parents-in-law, which contradicts the common perception, also based on empirical studies, that it is the parents of the mother who help the most in looking after children (Perez Ortiz, 2007). The percentage of parents of one sex that help should correspond to the percentage of parents-in-law of the opposite sex that help, but this is not what we find. This means that individuals tend to overestimate support received from the biological family (over that received from their spouse's family), above all in the case of men.

TABLE 4.4

Link with person that provides support in the care of children, by age of the youngest child and sex of respondent

	AGE OF THE YOUNGEST CHILD			SEX OF THE RESPONDENT		
	0 TO 2	3 TO 6	7 TO 13	MEN	WOMEN	**TOTAL**
Parents	82	69	52	68	72	**70**
Brothers	–	7	–	–	7	**5**
Sisters	26	12	27	19	21	**20**
Parents of spouse/partner	37	44	19	49	24	**35**
Siblings of spouse	7	15	11	9	12	**11**
Other family members	10	11	47	22	17	**19**
Friends	–	–	22	–	12	**8**
Other people	16	27	22	20	22	**21**
Total responses	197	193	203	148	183	**331**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases. Percentages out of the total number of cases in which support is received.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007.

Apart from the age of the children, whether or not grandparents provide childcare also depends on how far away they live; the greater the distance, the more difficult it is to provide support. Having siblings, in particular sisters, who may compete for the grandparents' available time and energy, does not seem to impact on the likelihood of receiving support, as, taking into account distance and the age of the children, no significant differences appear between families based on whether there are siblings or not.

As has been indicated, in the social network it is the parents, along with the parents-in-law, who most frequently provide support with childcare; this is most often the case when the respondent is a man. The support provided by parents-in-law is not a substitute for that provided by parents; rather support tends to be cumulative. Thus, only 8% of those interviewed who do not receive support with childcare from their parents receive it from their parents-in-law, while 39% of those that receive support from their parents-in-law also receive it from their parents. In addition to the age of the children and sex of the person interviewed, the support received from parents-in-law depends on geographic distance and emotional closeness, but not on the number of brothers or sisters in-law potentially competing for support. The size of municipality and social class, as with support received from parents, is not significant.

The third category of persons most frequently cited as providing support with childcare is that of sisters. In contrast to support received from parents or parents-in-law, this support is not closely associated with the age of the children, despite taking varied forms in regard to intensity and content. The likelihood of receiving support from siblings does not depend on the number of siblings one has but on whether one has sisters or not, as well as on where they live. As in the case of support received from parents-in-law, the assistance from siblings is not a substitute for the support received from parents, but is complementary. Among those who do not receive support from their parents, only 8% receive support from siblings, whereas 31% of those who receive support from their parents also receive support from siblings.

If when the children are very young, support comes primarily from grandparents, as the family cycle progresses, the persons providing support become more varied. When the children are school-age, support tends to

come from other members of the network as well; when the support is occasional, it is often from friends and other relatives.

4.1.2. Support received: other types of services

Support received from the social network is not limited to the care of children or the elderly, although this is the type of support that is most visible. As can be seen in table 4.5, this is not the type of assistance that is most often provided, although it is the type of support which is socially and even individually most valued. The most frequent type of support received in the year prior to the interview was for different types of household repairs; among these, help related to making the home more comfortable is more frequent than automobile repairs. Significant differences by sex – which also appear with other types of assistance related to domestic functions (household tasks, shopping, etc.), but not, as we have seen with the care of the children – suggest that this help is identified as personal support for whomever is commonly responsible for the task in question and not as help or support for the home, even though all the members of the household benefit from it. Therefore, differences by sex are not a result of the fact that one sex has greater access to a specific type of support, but rather are a reflection of the unequal division of responsibilities in the home.

The second most frequent form of support received is with domestic tasks/chores and shopping. Some typical examples include: Young emancipated men eating at their parents' home and taking their clothes to be washed and ironed; mothers doing food shopping or preparing a meal for the family of a daughter who works (or vice versa), and washing, ironing or sewing for a sister.

Assistance with government related bureaucratic tasks (*e.g.* social security, taxes, health care services) or private ones (*e.g.* banking, insurance) are also relatively frequent, as indicated by one out of five persons interviewed (19%), without significant differences by sex. A similar proportion receives assistance with transport (*e.g.* rides to work, school and the doctor).

The support received in the case of serious illnesses requiring hospitalization, although low, must also be included. As Duran (1999) pointed out, the support from families and specifically women – who play an essential role in caring for family members who are ill – facilitates,

among other things, shorter hospital stays and more personalized care, with a corresponding savings in costs. In addition, this support can be for the person who is ill or for their family members. According to the ERSS 2007, 9% of the population received assistance of some sort (either the person interviewed or their family members) from someone in their circle who brought them personal effects, spent time with them, cooked for their family, etc. This represents one out of three persons who were hospitalized, and the proportion increases the longer the hospital stay.

TABLE 4.5

Percentage of persons that state they have received different types of support in the 12 months prior to the survey

	MAN				WOMAN			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Domestic repairs	53	35	21	**38**	36	18	20	**25**
Household maintenance tasks	30	15	10	**20**	23	11	12	**16**
Car repair	15	6	3	**8**	3	3	–	**2**
Gardening	5	12	5	**8**	5	3	6	**5**
Home improvement	10	10	4	**9**	11	4	3	**6**
Shopping	7	2	4	**4**	10	9	12	**10**
Transportation	20	18	5	**16**	12	12	3	**9**
Shopping and transportation	9	5	3	**6**	14	8	7	**9**
Domestic tasks	23	8	10	**14**	21	10	19	**17**
Bureaucratic tasks	24	17	22	**21**	18	13	26	**19**
Providing care in the case of hospitalization(1)	–	–	–	**58**	–	–	–	**72**
Providing personal care for dependent persons(2)	–	–	–	**58**	–	–	–	**65**
Looking after children(3)	54	28	–	**40**	50	30	–	**45**
Has received support in some area in the last 12 months	79	61	60	**68**	72	51	60	**62**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases. The difference up to 100 for each value is the percentage of those interviewed that do not receive this type of support. (1) Percentage of the total of those that have been hospitalized; (2) of the total that state they need help in domestic tasks (getting dressed, taking a bath, walking, etc.); (3) non-paid support out of the total of parents of children under 14 years of age.
Source: Compiled from the data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

In total, in the year prior to the interview two out of three respondents (65%) received some form of the types of support mentioned. Most common was to receive one (29%) or two (20%) types of support, but there was also a significant proportion that received three or more types of support (16%). In contrast to what is frequently believed, the younger the individual interviewed, regardless of sex, the more likely he/she is to have received support. This reveals a very clear bias in the "solidarity economy" towards younger generations in the initial phases of their independent life cycles, rather than towards the elderly (except in cases of functional dependency).

However, in certain dimensions the relationship is not linear. In other words, getting help with domestic or bureaucratic tasks is relatively more frequent when one is young, but also when one is very old, particularly in the case of women. On the other hand, not only is a person more likely to receive support when he or she is young, but the amount of support received decreases with age – although it goes up again at advanced ages and with the loss of individual autonomy. Thus, the average support received throughout the life cycle takes the form of a "U".

Support in the form of personal services is received from many different people (table 4.6). This is probably because often this type of support is given in very specific circumstances, and if it is recurring, it is not very time-intensive. In this regard, we have not found the flow of support along intergenerational lines to be predominant, as is the case with support in the care of children or dependent elders, which is very often more time-intensive and recurring, if not regular. With the exception of support in the case of hospitalization (in which eight out of ten persons received support from their parents or children), intergenerational support accounts for no more than 40% of the cases of this type of support (*e.g.* domestic repairs, shopping, transport, household or bureaucratic tasks). Siblings or friends are most often cited as the source of support for personal services, along with "other persons". In any case, relatives are most frequently mentioned as the source of support, but in regard to occasional support, friends or neighbours are also mentioned. In fact, friends are mentioned more often than siblings in regard to support with repairs, transport or bureaucratic tasks.

TABLE 4.6

Link with the person from whom one receives support: In percentages based on multiple responses

	DOMESTIC REPAIRS	SHOPPING/ TRANSPORTATION	DOMESTIC TASKS	HELP WITH BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES	CARE IN CASES OF HOSPITALIZATION	CHILDCARE
Parents	21	25	27	10	26	64
Siblings	22	13	12	18	34	26
Children	8	22	10	22	54	–
Other family members	10	–	5	10	13	16
In-laws	20	20	10	5	21	49
Friends	40	22	8	22	18	8
Neighbours	11	10	–	–	9	3
Other persons	9	5	28	17	6	18
Total responses	140	117	102	98	179	184
Number of cases	506	113	215	244	223	160

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

4.2. Support provided

4.2.1. Support provided in looking after children

In the two following sections we will analyse the characteristics of the "solidarity economy" from the perspective of those providing these types of support. We want to identify: How much members of the network help others; how they help; and who they help. Following the same scheme used regarding support received, we will begin with support in childcare. We will first analyse childcare support in general, apart from the relationship to the children involved, and afterwards, focus on grandparents looking after grandchildren.

One out of three emancipated women (34%) and one out of four men (27%) state that they provide some form of support in looking after children with whom they do not live (table 4.7). Although this difference is statistically significant, it should be stressed that it is small. The fact that there is not a greater difference is in part due to men's growing involvement in providing unpaid care for others and, in particular, for children (Meil,

2007; Alberdi and Matas, 2007). It is also due to a tendency among respondents to emphasize the support they provide, however irregular it may be; this is particularly true in the case of men. This appears to be similar to the discrepancies we find in how men and women evaluate the division of domestic tasks (Coltrane, 2000) and in differences by sex regarding the support received by different members of the family network and support given (Bengston and Kuypers, 1971).

TABLE 4.7

Unpaid childcare support for non-coresiding children: In percentages

	MEN				WOMEN			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
No support	67	77	77	73	58	67	75	66
Occasional	31	19	11	22	36	23	14	26
Regular	3	4	11	5	5	7	11	7
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	230	209	142	573	280	292	244	811

Contingency coefficient (men) C=0.23 p≤0.001. Contingency coefficient (women) C=0.23 p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Generally, support in looking after children is occasional, although, in the case of grandchildren, it is often regular. Another aspect to be stressed again is that this support is not limited to the care of grandchildren by their grandparents, but a fairly stable proportion of people of all ages provide this kind of support. While at younger ages this support is occasional, among those 60 years of age and over, the proportion that provides regular support is significant.

In an attempt to be more precise in understanding what is meant by occasional or regular support, the respondents were also asked to estimate the amount of time dedicated to caregiving. The results can be seen in table 4.8. On the one hand we can see that "regularly" does not necessarily mean many hours of dedication, and that "occasionally" does not mean in all cases (although in most) less than one hour per week. Whether regular or occasional, in four out of five cases, support is provided less than 10 hours per week. Women tend to say that they dedicate a greater number of hours to providing support than men, although the difference is not very large.

Childcare for non-coresiding children is not concentrated among seniors because this type of support is not only for grandchildren, but is also given to other members of the social network, such as the children of siblings, brothers and sisters-in-law, other relatives, friends, neighbours or acquaintances (table 4.9). In fact, this plurality of connections is just another manifestation of the plurality of support that some families with small children receive from different members of their social network, which we analysed previously. Overall, and based on the responses of the persons interviewed, the proportion of those who help in the care of nieces and nephews, surprisingly, seems as widespread as the proportion that help in caring for grandchildren, although the support is provided in different phases of the life cycle and with different levels of dedication in terms of time and effort. On the other hand, the proportion of persons that help non-relatives with childcare, although low, is not negligible and, in contrast to help in caring for nieces and nephews, is not necessarily concentrated on looking after very young children. Examples of this type of support include accompanying children to school, baby-sitting for them before they go to school in the morning or until their parents get home from work, etc.

TABLE 4.8

Frequency with which the respondent provides unpaid childcare support for non-coresiding children

	MEN				WOMEN			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
No support	67	77	77	73	58	67	75	66
Occasionally/Sometimes	21	16	13	17	24	20	11	19
Less than 10 hours a week	12	5	6	8	12	6	4	7
From 10 to 19 hours a week	–	–	–	1	3	–	5	3
20 or more hours a week	–	2	–	2	4	5	6	4
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	230	209	142	573	280	292	244	811

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases. Contingency coefficient (men) C=0.19 p≤0.001. Contingency coefficient (women) C=0.20 p≤0.001.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Comparison by sex reveals that there are no significant differences for the different categories analysed, with the exception of the case where there is no kinship relationship. In this regard, we must again stress bias in relation to sex, as men have a tendency to exaggerate the support they provide. This is particularly evident if we consider the support provided and received by nieces and nephews. Three times as many families say they receive support from their children's aunts than from uncles on the mother's side, while the percentage of men and women that say they look after their nieces and nephews barely differs (compare tables 4.2 and 4.9). Regarding the time dedicated to care in these different categories, while in the case of care for grandchildren the situations are heterogeneous, in the rest of the cases, with few exceptions, care is occasional or involves relatively little time (in general no more than between one and five hours weekly – see table 4.10).

TABLE 4.9

Percentage of respondents that provide unpaid childcare support, by sex, age and family link with the child

	MEN				WOMEN			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Grandchild	–	5	28	**11**	–	8	27	**12**
Nephew/niece	23	9	–	**11**	25	10	–	**12**
Other relation	5	–	–	**3**	7	4	–	**4**
No relation	4	7	–	**4**	11	10	3	**8**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases. The difference up to 100 for each category is the percentage that does not look after children.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Individuals that help look after the children of persons with whom they do not live, aside from differences by sex, are homogeneously distributed throughout society. As in the case of support received, this support is equally common in towns as well as in small or large cities, both in regard to frequency and intensity. We also do not find differences based on social class in the proportion of individuals that state they provide support, although the higher the socio-economic class, the greater the probability that the support given will be occasional, while among lower socio-

economic classes, the support is more often regular and tends to involve more time, depending on the age of the children.

TABLE 4.10

Percentage of respondents that provide unpaid childcare support, by amount of time and family link with the child: Percentage of the total that provide support

	GRANDCHILD	NEPHEW/ NIECE	OTHER RELATION	NO RELATION
Occasionally/Sometimes	51	64	60	61
Less than 10 hours a week	13	28	29	25
From 10 to 19 hours a week	11	6	–	–
20 or more hours a week	25	–	–	–
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	91	141	38	81

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007.

Support in looking after grandchildren

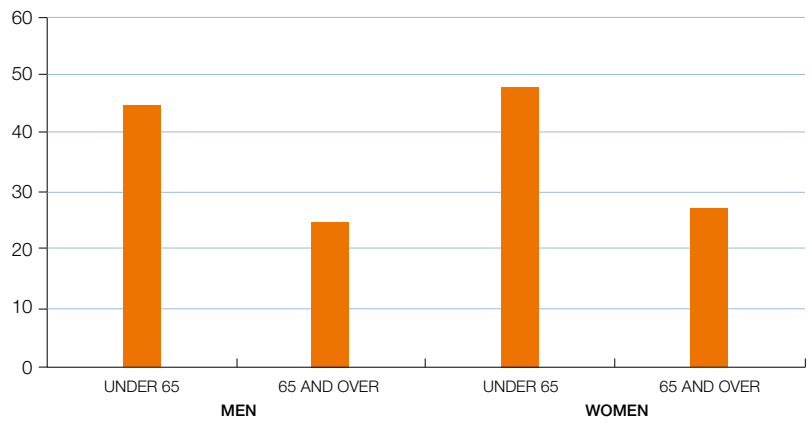
It is particularly interesting to analyse grandparents' support for grandchildren. According to the ERSS 2007, 36% of respondents with grandchildren helped in their care in the 12 months prior to the survey. This is slightly below the results from the SHARE survey (2004), focused on the analysis of the population 50 years of age and older. According to this survey, 40% of grandparents in Spain look after their grandchildren (Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007).

As seen previously, differences by sex are not particularly great or statistically significant (graph 4.1). These results do not coincide with those from other sources regarding Spain (Perez Ortiz, 2007; Hank and Buber, 2007), but they do match those obtained from the Survey on Family Networks in Andalusia (*Instituto de Estadistica de Andalucia*, 2007; Tobio *et al.*, 2010). The reasons for this lack of difference between grandmothers and grandfathers in the care of their grandchildren can be found in the growing involvement of men in the care of children, in the tendency of men to exaggerate their participation, and in the fact that providing support does not involve doing so every day and for long periods of time,

but can vary greatly in terms of frequency. In addition, when the grandmother takes care of the grandchild, the grandfather also tends to be involved.

GRAPH 4.1

Percentage of grandparents that have looked after their grandchildren in the last 12 months, by age and sex



Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS survey, 2007.

Although the percentage of grandparents who say that they look after their grandchildren is not as high as one might initially imagine, in recent years it has increased substantially. Despite the comparison of data on Spain from the 2003 and 2007 SHARE surveys, which suggest there has been a decline in the proportion of grandparents that look after their grandchildren (from 40% to 34%),[(1)] from a broader time perspective this proportion has increased substantially. Considering only grandparents that are 65 years of age or older, the data provided by the CIS surveys, *Apoyo Informal a Personas Mayores* (1993) [Informal Support for the Elderly] and *Condiciones de Vida de los Mayores* (2006) [Living Conditions of the Elderly] show that the involvement of grandparents in looking after grandchildren has increased substantially in the last decade and a half, as

(1) Author's analysis of the survey micro data. Unweighted values.

using the same question, the surveys reveal that there has been a 75% increase, going from 15% to 25%. At the same time, the proportion of seniors with grandchildren has not changed (82.7% and 82.5% respectively). This greater involvement is found among both grandmothers and grandfathers, as in the majority of cases, care is provided by both, although they participate in different activities. However, there has been a somewhat greater increase in the involvement of grandfathers, not only because they have become more involved in the care provided by grandmothers, but also because of changing gender roles and the acceptance of the role of caregiver among grandfathers (table 4.11). As a result, the proportion of grandfathers who do not have a partner (because of separation, divorce or widowhood) and who help in looking after their grandchildren has virtually doubled for the period indicated (from 8% to 15%).

TABLE 4.11

Changes over time in percentage of grandparents 65 years of age and older that look after their grandchildren, by age and sex

	MEN			WOMEN		
	65-74	75+	TOTAL	65-74	75+	TOTAL
1993 (study 2,072)	25	7	**15**	28	7	**14**
2006 (study 2,647)	40	11	**26**	37	10	**23**

Note: Percentages of persons with grandchildren.
Source: Compiled from data from the survey, Informal Support for the Elderly, (CIS study 2.072, November, 1993) and the survey, Living Conditions of the Elderly, (CIS study 2.647, September, 2006).

Although a part of this increase may be due to motherhood being postponed to a later age, and therefore, parents becoming grandparents at a later age, the most reasonable hypothesis to explain the increase in the involvement of grandparents in the care of their grandchildren is the growing incorporation of women into the labour force and the consequent problems of balancing family and work (Perez Ortiz, 2007; Tobio *et al.*, 2010). This hypothesis, however, cannot be verified with the data from these studies, as they do not provide relevant information on this question.

The time dedicated to looking after children varies substantially with the grandparents' age, as we have seen above. According to the Living Conditions of the Elderly Survey (CIS, 2006b), almost one third of

grandparents between the ages of 65 and 75 – without significant differences based on sex – say that they help look after their grandchildren several times a week, if not every day. This proportion falls to one out of ten among those over 75 years of age. Helping every day or almost every day does not mean that the amount of time involved is high, as help can be more or less occasional though recurring (*e.g.* taking children to school, picking them up, or giving them lunch). According to the ERSS, half of the grandparents that say they help look after their grandchildren state that they do so "occasionally"; only a minority says they do so for more than 20 hours per week (table 4.10). Women are more likely to state that they spend more time with their grandchildren than men when the care given is not occasional.

The types of tasks in which grandparents help are varied, and none of them is dominant, as we can see in table 4.12. The tasks that are least often mentioned are taking the children to and from school and staying with them during school holidays. With the exceptions of providing meals and looking after the grandchildren when they are ill, there are no significant differences based on the sex of the respondent, and in any case, the differences that exist are small. This suggests that involvement in certain tasks is not seen so much as an activity carried out by the person interviewed, but more as an activity which takes place in the home, even though the person who actually carries out the task may be the spouse (the grandmother). The number of tasks in which grandparents are involved also varies and depends on both the needs of the grandchildren and on what the grandparents are able to do. As a result, when grandparents are younger, they help with more tasks; however, when grandparents work, the number of tasks is fewer.

It is also important to analyse class differences in this area of support. While no class differences appear in regard to general support given to members of the social network, there are class differences regarding the care of grandchildren, though not what might be expected. The proportion of grandparents that dedicated some time to looking after their grandchildren during the year prior to the survey is higher among higher socio-economic classes than among the lower socio-economic classes, but their help is almost always occasional and does not require much time.

Among lower socio-economic classes, in contrast, when help is given it is more time-intensive. This is true regardless of the age of the respondent.

TABLA 4.12

Types of childcare tasks grandparents are involved in: In percentages[1]

	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Accompanying the child to or from school	71	40	**52**
Preparing meals for the children	65	76	**71**
Taking the children to the park or for a walk	74	71	**72**
Looking after the children when they are ill	40	61	**53**
Looking after the children when they do not have school	79	65	**70**
Looking after the children when the parents go out	89	67	**76**
Staying with the children until the parents get home from work	69	69	**69**
Staying with the children on school vacations	55	52	**52**

Note: (1) The difference up to 100 of each of the percentages is the percentage of grandparents that do not carry out the corresponding task.
Source: Compiled from the data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

In comparison with other European countries, the percentage of Spanish grandparents that state that they looked after their grandchildren during the year prior to the survey is among the lowest; this is in contrast to what is generally believed (table 4.13). According to the 2007 SHARE survey, Spain is the European country with the lowest proportion of grandparents of 50 years of age or more that say they have looked after their grandchildren: 33% in comparison to an average of 48%, with Ireland (63%) and Holland (58%) being the countries with the highest percentages. Although the results were slightly different, the 2003 SHARE survey also revealed Spain to be one of the countries with the lowest percentages (40% versus an average of 49%, along with Switzerland the lowest percentage of the countries considered). Therefore, the results are consistent (Attias-Donfut, Ogg and Wolf, 2008). However, when grandparents help in Spain they tend to do so more frequently than grandparents in Nordic countries, but less frequently than in other Mediterranean countries (Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007; Hank and Buber, 2007).

The reasons that analysts of this survey give for the greater involvement of grandparents in the care of their grandchildren in Nordic countries is the higher percentage of single-parent families in these countries, which makes the support of grandparents, even if only occasional, more important. In the countries of the south this support is less necessary, as there are fewer single-parent families. Fewer grandmothers working, along with the growing integration of their daughters in the labour market in Mediterranean countries, explain the greater time commitment of grandmothers in Mediterranean countries (Attias-Donfut, Ogg and Wolf, 2004).

TABLE 4.13

Frequency with which grandparents help in the care of their grandchildren in Europe: In horizontal percentages

	DOES NOT LOOK AFTER	ALMOST EVERY DAY	ALMOST EVERY WEEK	ALMOST EVERY MONTH	WITH LESS FREQUENCY	TOTAL
Ireland	37	13	22	11	17	100
The Netherlands	42	2	28	12	16	100
Belgium	43	10	25	9	13	100
Denmark	44	2	13	21	20	100
Sweden	46	2	15	16	22	100
France	49	6	16	8	22	100
Total	**52**	**10**	**16**	**10**	**13**	**100**
Switzerland	52	3	23	10	12	100
Italy	53	24	14	5	6	100
Greece	54	20	13	6	6	100
Poland	54	22	10	7	6	100
Germany	57	7	16	8	12	100
Austria	59	9	14	9	8	100
Czech Republic	61	7	14	9	9	100
Spain	**67**	**12**	**10**	**4**	**7**	**100**

Note: Time reference: "in the last 12 months".
Source: Compiled from micro data from the SHARE survey, 2007.

4.2.2. Other support provided in the form of services

As with support received, the support provided is not limited to the care of children or the elderly, but extends to many other dimensions of daily

life (see table 4.14). The percentage of persons that recognize having provided support in the form of personal services is in general higher than the percentage of those that say they have received support; this is true for both men and women. There is a 10 percentage point difference in certain cases. Although receiving support predominates in certain stages of life and providing support in others, these differences suggest that there is either an overestimation of the support provided or an underestimation of that received. Only men recognize having received more help in domestic tasks than they give, and the same is true for women regarding domestic repairs.

Consistent with the hierarchy of support received, the support most frequently given is that related to domestic repairs. One out of two men (54%) and one out of four women (23%) say they have helped someone with their skills in this area. As with support received, it is much more common to provide support through different types of activities aimed at improving household comfort than in maintaining the family vehicle.

The second most common type of support is with shopping or domestic tasks, which is above all, though not exclusively, provided by women. Thus, 54% of women and 32% of men state that they provide support in this area, more often with shopping than with other domestic tasks, particularly in the case of men. Regarding these types of tasks, it is young men, without partners or family, who above all say they help others with whom they do not live. In the case of women, being in a relationship and having a family does not keep them from occasionally providing this type of support.

Help with transport and bureaucratic tasks are also quite common. Around one out of four individuals provided support with these activities during the year prior to the survey. Both men and women tend to help with these matters, although men tend to provide transportation for other persons more frequently than do women (38% versus 26%).

In total, three out of four survey respondents (76%) say they have provided at least one of these types of support, and most common is that this support has been provided to two persons; although one out of three respondents (31%) say they have provided support to three or more persons, while one

out of four (25%) say they have helped one person. As we have seen, it is the youngest generations who receive the most support, and it is the youngest generations, along with the middle-aged, that most frequently say they provide support (independent of the amount of time or frequency involved) to other members of their network (table 4.14). In addition, as we can see, the amount of support provided decreases with age.

TABLE 4.14

Percentage of persons that state they have helped members of their social network in the 12 months prior to the survey

	MAN				WOMAN			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Domestic repairs	62	61	30	**54**	35	26	6	**23**
Household maintenance tasks	40	36	16	**33**	22	17	–	**15**
Car repair	14	12	6	**12**	–	–	–	**1**
Gardening	7	19	7	**12**	10	8	3	**7**
Home improvement	16	16	7	**14**	5	4	–	**4**
Shopping	11	8	6	**8**	16	25	14	**18**
Transportation	31	27	13	**25**	22	15	3	**14**
Shopping and transportation	17	11	11	**13**	23	9	3	**12**
Domestic tasks	16	10	2	**10**	36	27	10	**25**
Bureaucratic tasks	22	29	18	**24**	30	21	4	**19**
Care of dependent persons	11	18	18	**15**	27	34	14	**26**
Co-residing	7	8	14	**8**	5	12	7	**8**
Non-coresiding	4	10	4	**7**	22	21	17	**17**
Looking after non-coresiding children	34	23	22	**27**	42	33	25	**34**
Has provided support in at least one of these dimensions	89	84	58	**80**	87	80	46	**73**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases. The difference of each percentage up to 100 is the percentage of each sex and age category that does not provide support in the corresponding task.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

On the other hand, as is well-known, women more often provide help with domestic tasks and taking care of children and dependent adults, while

men tend to provide help with domestic repairs and transportation, which reflects the fact that traditional and semi-traditional gender roles remain widespread. These differences, although important, are limited (with the exception of the important dimension of providing care to the dependent elderly) and reflect changes that have taken place in this dimension of family life. Overall, the percentage of respondents that provided one or another type of help or support does not differ based on sex, nor does the number of types of support provided.

The recipients of support are very diverse (table 4.15), which demonstrates again that focusing the analysis of family or economic solidarity only on intergenerational relationships is inadequate. In this regard, there are several points that must be considered.

Parents, not children, are the main recipients of support, with the exception of childcare; this is the case with providing help with domestic tasks and providing care in the case of dependency.

Although family members are the main beneficiaries of support, a significant percentage of individuals also help friends, neighbours and even others with whom they have weaker ties. This support, which is usually irregular, consists of collaborating in domestic repairs, transportation and bureaucratic tasks.

Siblings do not appear to be the primary recipients of unpaid help, despite the fact that in analysing support received they do appear as an important source of help. In fact, friends are more often mentioned as beneficiaries of support than siblings. Siblings most often receive help with domestic repairs, childcare and, to a lesser extent, in resolving bureaucratic tasks.

The different types of support have different recipients. Individuals in the social network most often provide support in caring for dependent persons when those persons are their parents or parents-in-law, while help with domestic repairs is more often provided to friends or siblings. Help with domestic tasks is principally offered to parents or parents-in-law, while help with shopping or transportation tends to be provided to neighbours or friends. Help with bureaucratic tasks reveals no primary recipient, although parents tend to be included.

In addition to age, the probability of providing support depends on the size of the network; the greater the size of the network, the higher the probability an individual will provide some type of support. In addition, as with support in caring for children, the practice of providing mutual support is evenly distributed throughout society with no significant differences based on the size of the municipality. In contrast to what might be expected, the probability of providing support and the number of times support is received is higher among the better-off classes than for those with limited economic means; 41% of individuals at the lowest socio-economic level provide no support to others in contrast to 13% at the highest level.

TABLE 4.15

Percentage of recipients of support provided: Multiple responses

	DOMESTIC REPAIRS	SHOPPING/ TRANSPORTATION	DOMESTIC TASKS	BUREAUCRATIC TASKS	PERSONAL CARE DUE TO DEPENDENCE
Parents	25	19	44	29	45
Siblings	20	6	4	9	–
Children	8	4	9	8	3
Other bloods relatives	13	10	8	8	18
Parents of spouse	10	8	18	12	16
Other in-laws	6	9	4	5	4
Friends	42	33	10	24	4
Neighbours	7	17	7	14	5
Other persons	7	17	7	14	5
Total responses	138	123	113	113	100
Number of cases	446	543	212	254	242

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases. Percentages of total support provided.
Source: Compiled from the data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

4.3. International Comparison

Is this dimension of family solidarity more widespread in Spain than in other countries, as the common stereotype about the strength of family ties in southern European countries would suggest? Or, on the contrary, is Spain not as familist as is commonly thought?

International comparisons are not easy to make, given that the indicators we have available do not provide a complete picture regarding patterns of mutual support within family networks. In addition, different sources of data do not correspond in regard to the frequency and intensity of the support provided, in part because the groups they refer to are not always the same, but above all because the indicators used are different and relatively imprecise. However, although fragmentary, the data do provide a fairly clear and surprising image, which is consistent with the results we have presented on patterns of sociability: The exchange of support among non-coresiding family members in southern European countries and in Spain in particular, is not, comparatively speaking, as frequent as the stereotypes suggest.

Albertine, Kohli and Vogel (2007), analysed the SHARE 2004 data on the exchange of support in domestic tasks, care of others and bureaucratic tasks between parents and emancipated children (that do not live together) and concluded that in southern European countries the proportion of seniors that provide support to their children and vice versa is less than that found in the countries of central Europe and in the Scandinavian countries (Sweden and Denmark). However, when parents and their adult children do provide support to each other, they invest more time doing so. These patterns correspond to the different state welfare regimes that Esping-Andersen (1999) initially described and which we discussed in the introduction if we consider the Mediterranean countries as a specific regime.

In countries with a social-democratic welfare regime intergenerational support is more widespread, although it is not very time intensive, whereas in Mediterranean countries it is less frequent but more time-intensive when it happens. The countries with a conservative regime fall somewhere in between. If we also consider patterns of household co-residence as another dimension of support, the countries of southern Europe reveal higher levels of support than other countries, as we saw in the previous chapter. This suggests that intergenerational co-residence is the most common form of intergenerational solidarity in southern Europe, and therefore in Spain, while in the rest of Europe, support between households would be the most common form.

The data which support these conclusions are the following: While the proportion of persons 50 years of age or older with grandchildren who

say they look after their grandchildren (but do not live with them) is 40% in Spain, in the countries of central Europe this ranges from 43% to 59%, and in the Scandinavian countries from 52% to 60%. The average time invested in this care (according to estimates provided by the respondents) ranges, however, from the 1,338 hours in Spain to a range between 471 and 820 hours in central European countries, to only 382 hours for the Scandinavian countries.

Other support provided in the form of services (*e.g.* domestic tasks and bureaucratic tasks) is less frequent, but we find the same patterns: 3% in Spain; from 9 to 13% in central European countries, and from 17 to 20% in Scandinavian countries. The support received from non-coresiding children also follows the same pattern: In Spain 12%, with an average of 829 hours, in comparison with 12% to 21% in central Europe with an average between 298 and 535 hours, and around 18% in Scandinavian countries with an average of 232 hours (Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007).

The ESS 2004, which also asked respondents about the frequency of support provided for domestic tasks or personal care to non-coresiding parents and children, does not completely confirm the results obtained by Albertine, Kohli and Vogel. This source does confirm, however, that exchanges of support are more frequent in northern European countries, though not very time-intensive, and that in the south support between households is not as widespread, particularly in Spain. As can be seen in table 4.16, there is no north-south pattern of greater to lesser frequency of support, not for the support that parents give to their emancipated children or vice versa. Based on this survey, approximately one third of parents help their children in Scandinavian countries, the same proportion as found in Germany and France. This is somewhat below the percentages found in Portugal and Greece, but higher than the percentage found in Spain. In terms of the support parents receive from their children, the differences between the countries that make up the different geographic blocks are greater, but there is still no clear north-south pattern. There is also no clear relationship between welfare regime and the intensity of intergenerational support. The percentage of parents that state that they receive support from their children in Spain is low (20%), far below the patterns that we find in Eastern European countries, Germany, Finland and Iceland, among others.

In terms of the intensity of support, which is measured by the subjective evaluation of respondents through the possible responses of "A lot of support" and "Some support", we still do not find the pattern identified by Albertini, Kohli and Vogel. In all of the countries the percentage of those who state they receive or provide "A lot of support" is low, although it varies a lot from one country to another, from 1% to 14% without following a north-south pattern. In Spain, 4% believe they help a lot, and 5% say that they receive a lot of support, a very low percentage.

The EQLS (2007) also provides information on the frequency of unpaid care for children, the elderly and dependent persons, although without specifying if the persons involved live in the same household and without gathering information on the support received. In regard to providing childcare, if we consider individuals of 50 years of age or older, this care is primarily for grandchildren, as we have seen; if we consider the total population in regard to the care of the elderly and dependent persons, we include those who provide care to members of their household, as well as those that provide support to non-coresiding dependent family members. The analysis of the results obtained also do not confirm the north-south gradation in patterns of solidarity identified by Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, above all in regard to frequency of support (graph 4.2), although we do see that the intensity of support in southern European countries is greater.

Focusing on Spain, the percentage of individuals of 50 years of age or older that state that they help in the care of children is relatively high (33%) and, although less than in Scandinavian countries (from 36% in Denmark to 58% in Norway), it is similar to or higher than the percentage found in central Europe (from 18% in Austria to 28% in Belgium). The percentage of respondents that say they provide care daily is, however, higher (19%) in Spain than in Scandinavian countries (from 5% in Denmark to 14% in Norway) and in central Europe (from 5% in Austria to18% in Belgium). The patterns in providing care to the elderly or dependent persons are similar, although the percentage is lower (in the case of Spain, 20% of persons over 18 years of age say they provide support, and 13% indicate they do so at least once a week).

TABLE 4.16

Percentage of parents with emancipated children and of children with living non-coresiding parents that state they support or receive support in domestic tasks and personal care, by country and the intensity of the support

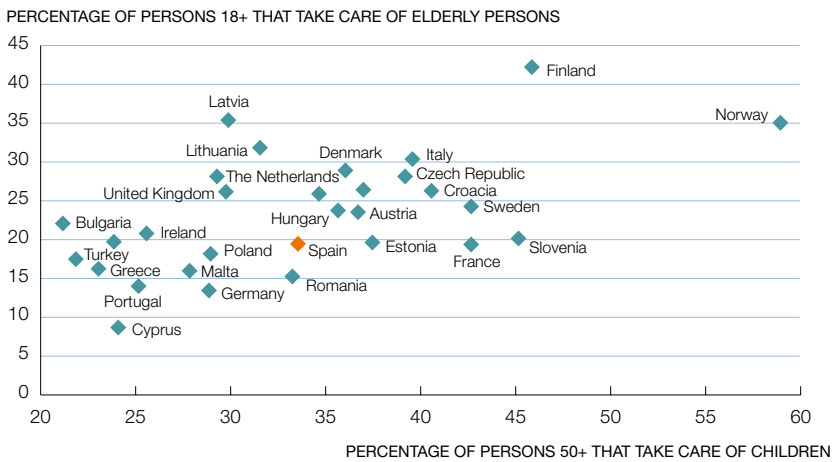
	SUPPORT CHILDREN		RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM CHILDREN	
	A LOT + SOME	A LOT	A LOT+ SOME	A LOT
Scandinavian countries				
Denmark	28%	3%	10%	1%
Finland	33%	3%	28%	3%
Iceland	52%	9%	28%	2%
Sweden	35%	4%	21%	2%
Norway	33%	5%	17%	1%
Northern European Countries				
United Kingdom	27%	7%	18%	3%
Ireland	32%	7%	29%	4%
Central European countries				
Austria	50%	10%	35%	5%
Belgium	40%	8%	14%	4%
Switzerland	26%	8%	14%	1%
Germany	38%	7%	32%	4%
France	36%	6%	17%	2%
Luxembourg	35%	11%	24%	6%
The Netherlands	22%	3%	11%	1%
Southern European countries				
Spain	27%	4%	20%	5%
Greece	39%	9%	21%	1%
Portugal	43%	6%	41%	4%
Turkey	21%	4%	26%	6%
Eastern European Countries				
Estonia	38%	4%	53%	7%
Poland	44%	7%	29%	3%
Hungary	45%	10%	33%	4%
Slovenia	39%	4%	37%	4%
Czech Republic	55%	5%	38%	3%
Slovakia	49%	4%	58%	6%
Ukraine	58%	9%	70%	14%

Source: European Social Survey, 2004. Adjusted data.

In short, in Spain the scope of mutual support in personal services and providing care between generations (when they do not live in the same household) is not much more widespread or much more time-intensive than in many other countries of central and northern Europe. The relative position within a scale from a lot of support to little support depends on the sources and the indicators used, but in no case is there evidence of widespread and intensive support.

GRAPH 4.2

Percentage of persons 50 years of age and older that take care of children, and of persons 18 years of age and older that take care of elderly or dependent persons in the European Union



Source: European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS, 2007). Adjusted figures.

The previous data, as well as the analysis of the data from the SHARE survey (Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007; Hank and Buber, 2007 and Bonsang, 2007) demonstrate that the countries of southern Europe, including Spain, are not as "familist" as is commonly assumed. In addition, this data also confirms that the development of services to provide dependent care by the welfare state – what Esping-Andersen (1999) refers to as the degree of "defamilization" of the welfare state – does not generate what Kunemund and Rein (1999) have called the *crowding out* effect or the erosion of intergenerational solidarity; rather it changes the forms of

solidarity. These results also demonstrate that in the countries in which family changes have been the most intense (*i.e.* in northern European countries), acts of mutual support between generations have not disappeared, instead they take the form of more or less occasional, though not time-intensive, support.

4.4. Individualization and exchange of support

In the introduction we formulated the hypothesis that as a consequence of the redefinition of the norms of family solidarity towards a conception of family solidarity as subsidiary, it would be likely that support provided by the family would become less intense; that is, less frequent or involving a reduced investment of resources (*i.e.* time and money). In addition, with the deinstitutionalization of family life and the development of the negotiating family, the probability of receiving support would be conditioned by the degree of emotional closeness among family members.

As we have seen, with the limited data available to make comparisons over time, there is no evidence of a growing decline in intergenerational mutual support. Rather, what we find are signs of the opposite in the case of caring for children, in which, as we have shown (table 4.12), there has been an increase in the involvement of grandparents as a result of the growing incorporation of women into the labour market. However, this same trend is undermining the foundations of this possible care. Grandmothers themselves also increasingly have work outside the home, which they cannot abandon to take care of their grandchildren. This means that they provide more sporadic care, as is found in the countries of northern Europe, where the massive incorporation of women into the labour market happened earlier. The data from SHARE 2004 and 2007 presented earlier support this thesis.

Regarding the provision of care for the dependent elderly, which we have not analysed in detail as it was treated in-depth in a recent study in this series (Tobio *et al.*, 2010), the trend is not toward a growing institutionalization of the elderly; rather, they are remaining at home, and we are seeing an expansion of caregivers, both within families (now including spouses and sons) and with non-family (now including domestic

employees and home aids), but with the family (*i.e.* primarily daughters) maintaining responsibility for care.

To analyse the impact of individualization on this dimension of family solidarity we have also carried out an analysis similar to that presented in the previous chapter. We want to measure the extent to which emotional closeness, the weakening of the norms of family solidarity and the decline in the size of the family and the increased likelihood of not having daughters influence the exchange of support. Not having information regarding the time dedicated to these tasks (although included in the questionnaire, many of the respondents declined to answer) we cannot apply the statistical technique of linear regression. In its place, we have used logistical regression, which estimates the probability that an individual would receive some type of support versus the probability of not receiving it. The results for support provided by parents, emancipated children and siblings can be seen in table 4.17, in which values above one indicate a greater probability of receiving support,(2) and those below one indicate the opposite (Jovell, 1997).

The results reveal that the decline in the size of the family – other than in the case of having no children or siblings, in which case there can be no exchange of support – does not seem to impact on the probability of receiving support from parents or from children. Although the estimators suggest that the higher the number of children, the higher the probability of receiving support, and the higher the number of siblings, the less likelihood of receiving support, the risk of error (level of significance) is higher than the conventionally accepted limit. However, if we consider the support provided to parents (data not included in the table), we do observe that it is more likely that those individuals with siblings did not provide any support (in the year referred to) to their parents than those who are only-children, which demonstrates that there is a certain compensation. In the case of support received from siblings, the likelihood of receiving it from those that have three or more siblings is substantially greater than for those that only have one sibling, which means that the decline in family size can translate into a decline in the support received.

(2) What this statistical technique estimates is not the probability of receiving support, but the odds ratio of receiving it or not. Given that this ratio and the probability of receiving support are proportional, and given that what it reveals in the text are the significance level and the direction and intensity of the effect, but not the concrete value of probability, we speak of the probability of receiving support.

TABLE 4.17

Factors that receiving support from parents, non-coresiding children or siblings depends on: Estimated odds ratio of receiving support versus not receiving support

	RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM PARENTS		RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM CHILDREN		RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM SIBLINGS
Characteristics of the respondent					
Sex: female	1.25	Sex: female	1.26	Sex: female	1.26
No.siblings		No. children		No.siblings	
1	0.89	1	1	1	1
2	0.59	2	1.78	2	1.63
3+	0.58	3+	2.28	3+	2.92***
Has sister(s)	1.77*	Has daughter(s)	0.82	Has sister(s)	0.64
Has paid work	1.87*	Age	1.09***	Has paid work	0.87
Has a partner	0.84	Lives alone	0.96	Has a partner	0.55*
Age of youngest child:				Age of youngest child:	
No children	1			No children	1
0-2	3.91***			0-2	2.28**
3-6	2.03*			3-6	1.63
6-13	0.38**			6-13	0.68
14-24	0.12***			14-24	0.85
25+	0.01			25+	0.34***
Social class	1.26	Social class	0.93	Social class	1.21
Individualization index	1.34	Individualization index	0.62	Individualization index	0.62***
Characteristics of the relationship					
Geographic distance	0.84***	Geographic distance (1)	0.98	Geographic distance (1)	0.84***
Emotional closeness	1.23**	Emotional closeness (2)	1.15	Emotional closeness (2)	1.36***
Parents living	3.37***				
Number of cases	610	Number of cases	486	Number of cases	982
r2 Cox-Snell	0.28	r2 Cox-Snell	0.18	r2 Cox-Snell	0.10

*Level of significance p≤ 0.05; ** Level of significance p≤0.01; *** Level of significance p≤0.001.
(1) Geographical distance of the closest child or sibling. (2) Emotional closeness with the child or sibling with whom one has most affinity.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Having sisters or daughters does not seem to influence the probability of receiving support, which is striking given the important role of women as the backbone of family networks. The reason for this is found in the heterogeneity of the support that is exchanged in family networks, as well as in the fact that we are not considering here the type or frequency of support but only if support is received or not. In the specific case of care for the dependent elderly, the sample does not include a sufficient number of cases; therefore the lack of significance may also have something to do with this. In fact, the care of the elderly continues to be primarily the responsibility of women, and although the involvement of men seems to be growing, the pace of change is slow (Rodriguez, Mateo and Sanchez, 2005; Abellan and Esparza, 2009; Tobio *et al.*, 2010), so that not having daughters impacts on this manifestation of family solidarity. On the other hand, if we analyse the odds ratios for providing support to parents (results not included in the table), we see that it is more likely they will receive support from women than from men, and that if there are sisters, it is less likely that they will have received support (in the year referred to).

As a consequence, the reduction in the size of the family and the increase in the probability of not having daughters does affect the frequency of exchange of support within family networks, increasing the likelihood of not receiving support when the network is very small and there are no women in the younger generation.

The probability of receiving support from parents as well as from siblings is conditioned by the emotional closeness between individuals, controlling for geographic distance. In other words, the greater the emotional closeness among parents, children and siblings, the more likely they will provide support to each other. This dimension does not seem to condition the support received from the children, but is significant in analysing the support given to parents (results are not shown). The interpretation that we can offer for these results is the same as in the previous chapter; in other words, they represent the effects of the disappearance of the patriarchal family model and the emergence of the negotiating family. The different generations and siblings have to invest time and effort to strengthen bonds, neutralize differences and encourage affectivity and trust, which facilitates the production of support.

The degree of identification with the norms of intergenerational solidarity, measured by the index of individualization, does not seem to influence the probability of intergenerational support, given that significance levels are higher than the conventionally accepted level. In the case of the exchange of support between siblings, however, the greater the degree of rejection of the norms of solidarity, the lower the probability of having received support, and vice versa.

These results, along with the previous ones, in our opinion, reveal that although there is a significant level of ambivalence in intergenerational relationships, the norms of mutual support are still powerful and condition behaviour in unexpected ways. However, in the case of siblings, relationships are more individualized and depend much more on affinity.

4.5. General characteristics of the exchange of support in services

The exchange of support between members of kinship and friendship networks is common, although it is normally occasional and not very time-intensive, rather than continual and involving a significant amount of time. Taking into consideration all households, regularly provided, time-intensive support only appears to a limited extent. This means that measuring the scope of the "solidarity economy" is very sensitive to the time period referred to. Thus, according to the ERSS 2007, 78% of those interviewed (the head of household or his/her partner) declared that they had provided unpaid support to non-coresiding persons in the year prior to the survey, although the proportion that recognized having received support was 65%. If we reduce the period referred to, the proportion of persons involved is also less. According to the Time Use Survey 2002-2003 of the INE [National Statistics Institute], the percentage of persons 10 years of age or more that helped members of other households in the month prior to the survey was 20%, and those that did so on any typical day was 7%. The time invested on a typical day by those that provided this type of support was, on average, two hours and six minutes. In comparison with other countries, the degree of solidarity between households is not especially high.

From this data we can estimate the weight this unpaid support would have in the economy if it were paid support. To do this we simply calculate the total number of hours of support provided in the year, assign it a monetary value based on a specific wage used as a reference, multiplying it by the total number of persons involved and dividing it by the GDP for the year referred to. The problem is determining what wage should be used; the proposals vary (Borderias, Carrasco and Alemany, 1995). If we value this work based on the average salary (14.37 euros/hour), this support represents 3.7% of the GDP, but if we value it based on the average salary in the "personal services" sector (7.98 euros/hour), it represents only 2% of GDP. While the contribution of men would range from 0.8% of GDP to 1.4%, according to the salary considered, that of women would range from 1.3% to 2.3% of GDP.

Support is provided by both women and men, although the surveys carried out present different results regarding the extent of sexual inequality in this sphere. According to the Time Use Survey 2002-2003, 50% more women provided support in other households in the month prior to the survey than men (24% and 15% respectively), although the average time invested in a typical day for those that did so was the same (2 hours and 6 minutes). In the ERSS 2007, in contrast, there are no statistically significant differences, although women provide more support in tasks that normally involve more time. In the ESS 2004 there are also no statistically significant differences in the support provided by parents to their emancipated children (30% women and 24% men).

The type of support that men and women provide to other households is still to a great extent related to the traditional division of labour between the sexes. Women help more often in caring for children, the ill and dependent persons, as well as with domestic tasks; men provide support more frequently with domestic repairs, caring for children, bureaucratic tasks and transportation. However, a significant proportion of men state that they also provide assistance with personal care and domestic tasks, and a significant percentage of women also help with domestic repairs and bureaucratic tasks. One of the spheres in which there is now greater involvement of men is in the care of children, not only, though primarily, in the care of grandchildren. Although the specific tasks of looking after

children still respond to gender stereotypes (*e.g.* women more often state that they provide meals for children and take care of them when they are ill, while men more often state that they take them to and from school), the differences are not very large, and in any case men are involved in many dimensions of providing care. In addition, a significant percentage of men without partners also state that they take care of children.

Older generations do not appear as the primary providers of support, nor young adults as the primary recipients. On the contrary, and without considering the amount of time invested, young people say they provide support more frequently than older generations, but they also state that they receive support more frequently than older generations. Thus, 87% of individuals under 39 years of age state that they have provided some support, while for those over 60 years of age the figure is 59%. Eighty eight percent of those under 39 also recognize having received some type of support, in contrast to only 57% of the older generation. This is because it is not only the parents who provide support to their children; although intergenerational support is the most frequent and intense in terms of time, it is not the only form of support in social networks. Friends, siblings, other family members and even neighbours also appear as actors in the exchange of support. In fact, although family is the principal source of support, friends – and to a lesser extent, neighbours – also provide and receive support in certain circumstances.

In general, the closer the person is, whether in geographic terms or emotional terms, the more likely it will be that he/she will provide support that requires more time, although support that requires more time (such as regular care of children or dependent persons) is primarily produced within the framework of intergenerational relationships. Friends provide help with domestic repairs, shopping, transportation and bureaucratic tasks, as well as with occasional care of children (although not for very young children). Neighbours provide support primarily with shopping and transportation. Parents and parents-in-law, in contrast, provide all types of support, but most frequently in looking after children (all ages, occasionally or regularly), taking care of the ill or dependent persons, as well as helping with domestic tasks.

Children provide support to their parents with domestic and bureaucratic tasks, but also, above all women, with personal care in the case of dependency. Siblings, however, do not appear as an important source of support. Their involvement is concentrated primarily in occasionally looking after children and helping with domestic repairs, but not in a proportion greater than that provided by friends.

One aspect to note in this context is the care of children. Grandparents are not the only persons that provide support with childcare; children are also looked after by other members of the network (*e.g.* sisters, sisters-in-law and friends), although in these cases the support tends to be more occasional than regular. When parents do receive support from the network caring for their children, they always cite the grandparents, among others; however, not all grandparents help with childcare: 55% of grandparents under the age of 65 state that they do not take care of their grandchildren, and this percentage increases with age. In addition, when grandparents do take care of their grandchildren this does not mean that they do so in a continual manner or one which involves a great deal of time. Nevertheless, 20% of the grandparents that state that they help look after their grandchildren spend 20 or more hours per week doing so. In comparison with other European countries, Spanish grandparents state that they take care of their grandchildren less often; however, when they do so, they do it more frequently than grandparents in Nordic countries, though less than in other Mediterranean countries (Italy and Greece).

Although the primacy of support in the form of services, in contrast to financial transfers, has been seen as a characteristic of family solidarity among lower socio-economic classes, who do not have money available but do have time to provide mutual support, the data analysed do not completely support this thesis. According the INE's Time Use Survey, both the number of persons and the amount of time invested decline as income and educational level decreases. According to the ERSS 2007, however, the likelihood of receiving unpaid support in services is not influenced by social class; in other words, it is as common among lower socio-economic classes as among those in higher income groups. In the specific case of support in looking after children, those with university education more frequently state that they receive such support than those

with lower professional qualifications. Furthermore, individuals in higher socio-economic classes tend to state more frequently than those belonging to lower socio-economic classes that they had helped other individuals in their social network, although with certain types of help (*e.g.* domestic repairs or domestic tasks) there are no differences. When those in higher socio-economic classes do provide support – for example, in looking after children – they do so, however, in an occasional manner, while among the lower socio-economic classes, such support is more regular and time-intensive.

V. Exchanges of financial support

In addition to support with personal services, strongly conditioned by physical proximity between the provider and the recipient, financial support is also an important part of the "solidarity economy" operating in family and friendship networks, although its impact on daily life is limited. In this chapter we examine the structure and characteristics of exchanges of financial support, make comparisons between the scope of these types of exchanges in Spain compared to other European countries, and analyse the effects of the process of individualization on the prevalence of this kind of support.

We address the following questions:

- How many families receive support and what type of support do they receive? Why do they receive this support? From whom do they receive it? What family and social circumstances increase the chances of receiving this kind of support?
- Who provides economic support to those in the network and under what circumstances?
- Are support exchanges between members of a network more common and more frequent in Spain than in other European countries?
- What effect does the process of individualization have on monetary support patterns? How has the reduction in family size affected the likelihood of receiving support?

5.1 Financial support received

5.1.1. Financial support received to purchase a home

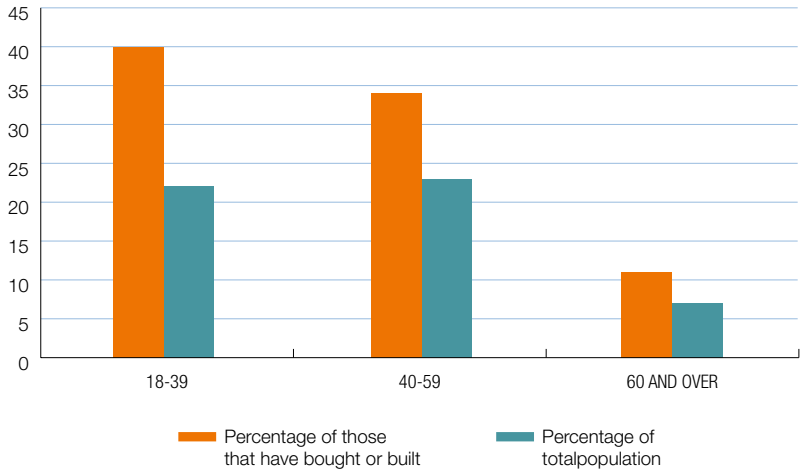
In Spain buying a home is one of the most important events in a person's life, decisively influencing the life project of young people as well as the formation of families. Among other factors, delays in emancipation are attributed to difficult access to housing due to high costs, which in turn conditions when couples decide to have children. Because of this, individuals, especially those who are in the process of emancipating from their parents, cannot contemplate acquiring a home as an individual endeavour; rather, it involves other members of the family network.

According to the ERSS 2007, nearly one out of three persons interviewed who had built or purchased a home (30%) said they had received help to do so; this represents 18% of all those interviewed. This percentage is the same for those who said they had helped others for this purpose (19%). The percentage drops substantially with age, with no differences by sex; thus, more than twice as many younger adults as older adults (40% of emancipated adults under 40 years of age compared to 12% of those over 60) received this form of support (see graph 5.1). Although the data may be affected by the memory effect since the survey enquires not only about the immediate past but about one's whole life, these age differences suggest that due to the increase in the cost of housing, the purchase of a house or apartment is not an individual decision but is increasingly conditioned by the support received from members of an individual's network. Additionally, with the rise in the standard of living the possibility of providing this kind of support has also increased. In this sense, social solidarity with respect to such a fundamental area in the life project of individuals has become stronger.

Most individuals have only purchased or built one home (61%), which means that most have only received support on a single occasion. However, 25% of those interviewed said they had received this type of support on more than one occasion.

GRAPH 5.1

Percentage of persons that have received support to buy or build a home



Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The most frequent providers of support are parents; nearly three out of four of those interviewed (71%) said they had received help from their parents and close to one out of four (24%) from their partner's parents (table 5.1). As with other dimensions of social solidarity, there is a tendency to emphasize support received from one's own parents more than from the parents of a spouse or partner among both men and women. This leads to an underestimation of support received or at least of those who have provided it. Other members of the network also provide support in these circumstances, although they do so less frequently. In contrast, friends are hardly mentioned as a source of support (unlike what will be seen when we analyse support provided). This is likely due to the fact that if friends lend money, it is usually a small amount and for a short period of time.

As seen in table 5.2, the type of support received is very heterogeneous. Although the most common form of support is a loan (53% of those who benefited from support got a loan), it is also fairly common to have a guarantor (27%), especially among young people. Being given a home or land is very rare. Direct subsidies in the form of down payments or

payments on loans are unusual but sufficiently prevalent to be taken into consideration. In general, one out of five of those interviewed (20%) state they were given their home or land or the money to pay for a portion of its cost.

TABLE 5.1

Relationship with the person that has provided support for the purchase or acquisition of a home: In percentages, multiple responses

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Parents	74	67	84	66	27	**71**
Siblings	14	5	–	13	–	**9**
Children	–	–	–	–	–	**–**
Other blood relatives	–	7	–	5	–	**5**
Parents of spouse	22	27	22	30	–	**24**
Other in-laws	10	7	11	–	–	**8**
Friends	7	4	–	8	–	**6**
Other persons	5	9	–	9	–	**8**
Total responses	131	126	117	133	27	**131**
Number of cases	107	107	99	93	22	**213**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007survey.

In addition, the vast majority of those who have borrowed money do not have to pay interest on it. Only 9% said they had paid interest or that they will have to in the future.

The amount of support received tends to be low when compared to the overall cost of the home, but in 27% the cases it represents more than a quarter of its value (table 5.3). There are no significant differences by sex, and the variations that appear by age are conditioned by the limited number of cases.

The probability of receiving financial support to buy a home is conditioned by social class, as well as by age. Individuals of a higher social status are more likely to receive help than those from lower social strata. It should be noted that this probability is not affected by the municipality of residence, or by the number of siblings competing for support from parents.

TABLE 5.2

Type of support received to purchase or build a home: In percentages, multiple responses

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Has been given a home	–	–	–	–	–	**2**
Has been given land	9	11	–	7	–	**10**
Has been helped with the construction	20	4	16	15	–	**14**
Has been given a loan	54	51	51	52	63	**53**
Has had a guarantor	27	27	36	21	–	**27**
Has been given the down payment	5	6	7	–	–	**6**
Has had mortgage payments made	–	–	–	–	–	**2**
Other support	4	–	–	5	–	**4**
Total responses	119	99	110	100	63	**119**
Number of cases	107	107	99	93	22	**213**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

TABLE 5.3

Amount of support received to purchase or build a home in relation to the total cost of the home: In percentages

	PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL THAT RECEIVES SUPPORT
Much less than a fourth	47
Approximately a fourth	13
Between a fourth and half	11
Between half and three quarters	7
Between three quarters and the total	9
No response	13
Total	**100**
Number of cases	205

Note: If the person has received support on many occasions, the maximum value received.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

5.1.2. Other financial support received

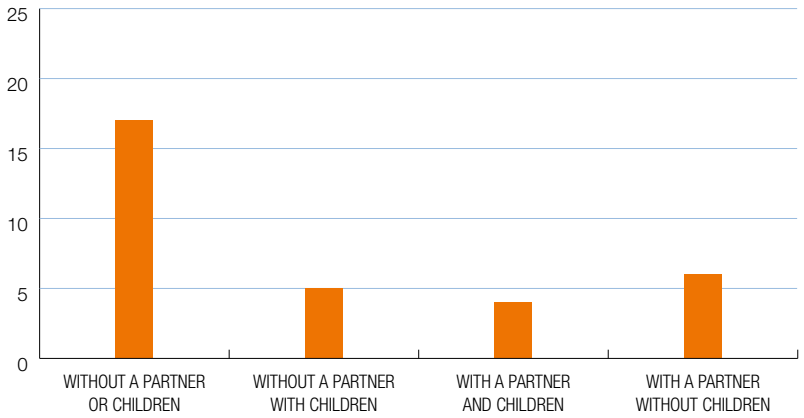
Financial support is provided not only for the purchase of a home; it may also be given for the purchase of other expensive goods, such as a car, or for starting a business, or even in situations of economic hardship. To explore the prevalence of these forms of support individuals were asked if they had received monetary support in the preceding five years to cover living expenses, without having to return the money. They were also asked if they had received a significant amount of money as a loan or a gift for purposes other than buying a home or covering living expenses, such as to buy a car, start a business, etc. In the following section the answers to these questions are analysed.

The percentage of emancipated adults that said they had received financial support to cover living expenses in the 5 years prior to the survey is very low, only 6% of those interviewed. In contrast, 20% claim to have provided this form of support. It is difficult to judge to what extent there is an underestimation of support received and an overestimation of support provided. It seems likely that there is a significant underestimation of support received, as individuals may have difficulty admitting their inability to be financially independent. There are no significant differences by sex, however, there are by age: 11% of those under 40 stated that they had received this form of support; for those between 40 and 60 this figure drops to 5%, and for those over 60 it is only 1%. The profile of those who receive this type of support is, therefore, young emancipated adults; many of them live alone, but the majority have a partner and children. In addition, they do not necessarily belong to the lowest social strata (graph 5.2).

This type of support is occasional (69%) more than regular. In 34% of the situations it is provided because of economic hardship stemming from unemployment, bankruptcy and other similar circumstances, while in 18% of the cases it is because of insufficient income to meet ordinary expenditures. An additional 41% of the cases are for other diverse motives (table 5.4). The amount of money involved in most cases is quite high: In 25% of the cases, between 1,000 and 3,000 euros; and in 28% of the cases over 3,000 euros. Only in a minority of cases is the amount smaller.

GRAPH 5.2

Percentage of respondents that have received money for living expenses in the last 5 years, whether regularly or occasionally, by family situation



Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

This type of financial support is almost always exchanged among family members, with networks of friends or neighbours playing no role, unlike what occurs with exchanges of certain kinds of personal services, such as looking after children, shopping and transportation (table 5.5). In most cases the family link is intergenerational; parents are the most frequent providers (59%) because the most frequent recipients are young emancipated adults. In addition, parents are mentioned more often than parents-in-law due to the previously mentioned tendency to emphasize support received from family of origin more than from in-laws. Support from in-laws is understood as something separate – for the respondent's partner – even though the respondent also benefits from it. Children are also mentioned as providers, although at a much lower percentage (11%), especially when the parents are elderly. In total, 76% of financial support to help with living expenses is intergenerational. Collateral relatives and especially siblings are not entirely absent, but appear infrequently as providers of this type of support, and mostly among the young.

TABLE 5.4

Reasons for receiving support to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

REASONS FOR SUPPORT	PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL THAT RECEIVES SUPPORT
Economic crisis due to unemployment, bankruptcy, etc.	34
Health problems	–
Pay for education	6
Family crisis: separation or death	–
Insufficient income	18
Other reasons	41
Total responses	**102**
Number of cases	77

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

TABLE 5.5

Link with the person that provides the support received to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

PERSONAL LINK	PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL THAT RECEIVES SUPPORT
Parents	59
Siblings	17
Children	11
Other blood relatives	6
In-laws	10
Other persons	15
Total responses	**123**
Number of cases	77

Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

In addition to support for living expenses and for purchasing a home, financial help may be received for other purposes. Because of this, respondents were asked if at any point in their life they had borrowed or been given a significant amount of money to purchase a car, start a business, or as an anticipated inheritance, etc. Given the lack of a specific timeframe, it is likely that selective memory has caused an underestimation

of support received, as older interviewees tend to forget specific instances in which they received such aid. However, a breakdown by age shows that the only noteworthy differences appear in the age group 60 years and over, which means that the effect of selective memory has probably been very limited. It is possible that the lower amount of support received by individuals in the 60 plus age group is due more to a lack of financial resources in the family network than to the effects of selective memory.

The number of individuals who recognize that they had received this type of financial help is 11%, compared to 22% who claim to have provided it, with no differentiation by sex (table 5.6). As with buying a home, social class is a determining factor in the likelihood of receiving this type of support; the higher the social class, the more likely an individual is to have received support in one form or another. This is the case if we consider both social status and the income level at the time of the interview.

TABLE 5.6

Monetary support received for expenses other than the purchase of a home or to cover living expenses: In percentages

	MAN				WOMAN			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Borrowed	10	8	–	7	4	8	–	4
Given	4	4	4	4	9	5	–	6
Borrowed and given	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
No, never	84	87	95	88	86	86	96	89
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	231	202	141	574	221	205	178	604

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

This support can take the form of a loan or a gift, but the proportion of individuals who have received both forms is low. Social class does not affect the form of support, instead the form is dependent on the type of link there is between the provider and recipient. In most cases support comes from one person, but the percentage of individuals receiving support from two or more persons is also significant (37%). The reasons

for support are very diverse (table 5.7), without any one being dominant, although the single most common reason is to purchase a car (21%). In half of such cases support is in the form of a gift, while in the other half, in the form of loans. Estimates of the amount received are conditioned by when the support was given, but if we only consider support received after the year 2000, we can see that the amounts are considerable; only 33% of recipients received less than 3,000 euros.

TABLE 5.7

Reasons for monetary support received for expenses other than the purchase of a home or to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

REASON TO RECEIVE SUPPORT	PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL THAT RECEIVES SUPPORT
Economic crisis due to unemployment, bankruptcy, etc.	15
Health problems	–
Paying for education	4
Family crisis: separation or death	–
Moving to a new home	6
Buying a car	21
Avoiding problems in division of assets	–
Starting a business	11
Other reasons	45
Total responses	102
Number of cases	168

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from the data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

As with other forms of financial support, in the vast majority of cases the connection between the provider and the recipient is familial and intergenerational (table 5.8). The most frequent providers are parents, primarily the recipient's own parents (73%) rather than parents-in-law (17%) for the reasons previously explained, with no differences based on sex. Siblings are hardly mentioned and are no more important than other family members or friends. When they provide support, they do so almost exclusively in the form of loans, and generally without asking for interest.

TABLE 5.8

Link with the person that provides monetary support for expenses other than the purchase of a home or to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

TYPE OF LINK	PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL OF THOSE THAT RECEIVE SUPPORT
Parents	73
Siblings	13
Children	–
Other blood-relatives	9
Parents of the spouse/partner	17
Other in-laws	–
Friends	7
Other persons	–
DK/NA	8
Total responses	127
Number of cases	168

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

5.2 Financial support provided

5.2.1. Financial support provided to purchase a home

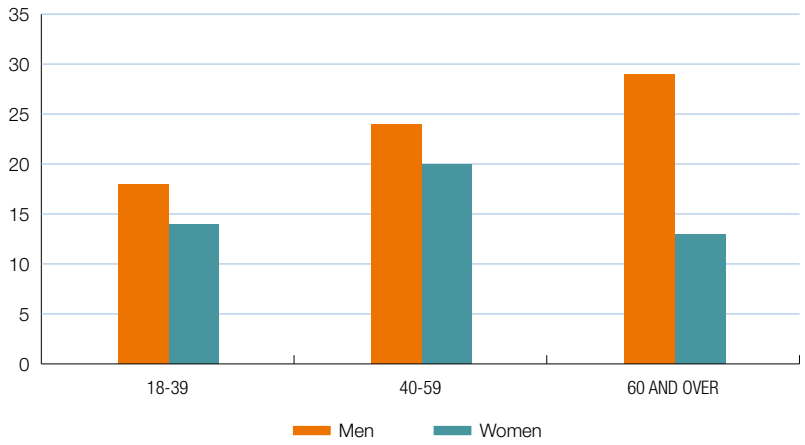
The percentage of those who say they have helped other members of their network in buying or building a home is 19%, but with notable differences by sex and age group, as shown in graph 5.3. This is similar to the percentage of individuals who say they have received such aid out of the general population. Men state they have provided this type of support more frequently than women (23% compared to 16%), even when controlling for employment circumstances and age, although differences decrease with age. In addition, the older the person is, the greater the likelihood of having provided support. This is due, on the one hand, to the increase in the standard of living and easier access to credit in recent decades, and on the other hand, to the centrality of parental assistance in the acquisition of housing for emancipated children.

Most respondents say they have provided support once (62%), but among the 60 and over age group, it is frequent to have done so more than once

(52%). Support is given 1.8 times on average, and although the number of recipients mentioned increases with the number of children, not all children have received support to purchase a home.

GRAPH 5.3

Percentage of respondents that have provided support to members of their social network to purchase or build a home, by age and sex: In percentages



Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Support is not only provided to children. The analysis of support received shows that the beneficiaries vary and depend primarily on age (table 5.9). Children are commonly cited as the beneficiaries of the support provided, but only approximately one out of three (30%) respondents say they have provided support to their children. This percentage increases to almost one out of two among the 60 and over age group (47%). In fact, only 13% of parents with emancipated children say they have helped their children purchase a home. Siblings (30%) and friends (23%) are also mentioned relatively frequently as providers of support, especially among younger respondents. Therefore, while among older adults intergenerational support is dominant, among younger adults collateral support is listed first, although this is often not recognized.

Given that the support referred to was not limited to a specific period of time, age differences suggest that with the increase in the standard of living and in housing prices (and the "buying craze" accompanying this), the spectrum of recipients of support has increased, although this may be a response to the selective memory effect. The increase in individuals acting as guarantors instead of lending money seems to confirm the first assumption. Although children, siblings and friends are the primary beneficiaries of this support it must be noted that a significant proportion of support for purchasing a home is provided to other members of the network (table 5.9).

TABLE 5.9

Link with the person that has received support in the purchase or acquisition of a home: In percentages, multiple responses

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Parents	–	6	–	–	–	**4**
Siblings	25	30	31	29	20	**30**
Children	23	38	–	40	47	**30**
Other blood-relatives	5	10	–	6	–	**7**
Family of the spouse/partner	16	8	11	9	15	**12**
Friends	31	13	36	19	14	**23**
Other persons	9	–	–	6	–	**5**
Total responses	109	105	78	109	96	**111**
Number of cases	126	95	71	87	62	**221**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The type of support provided usually takes the form of a loan or acting as a guarantor, but there is a higher percentage of those interviewed that state they have provided support by giving money or an actual property, as well as by helping with construction (table 5.10), than those who state they received such support. Virtually all loans given are interest-free (98%). The value of the support provided, aside from gifts, is usually below one quarter of the value of the property (55%), and its distribution by type of support is similar to the distribution found for support received.

TABLE 5.10

Types of support given to purchase or build a home: In percentages, multiple responses

SUPPORT GIVEN	PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL THAT GIVES SUPPORT
Has given a home	7
Has given land	–
Has helped with construction work	36
Has lent money	58
Has served as a guarantor	35
Has paid the down payment	6
Has made mortgage payments	3
Other support	9
Total responses	154
Number of cases	221

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007.

Beyond age and sex, the likelihood of providing support is homogeneously distributed throughout society and is not conditioned by the size of the municipality or the social class of the respondent. The reason why social class does not have an impact is because those with fewer economic resources tend to provide support in other forms, such as serving as guarantors or with construction, rather than providing gifts or loans. Support also depends on the size of the social network and especially on having emancipated adult children. The number of children does not affect the probability of providing support.

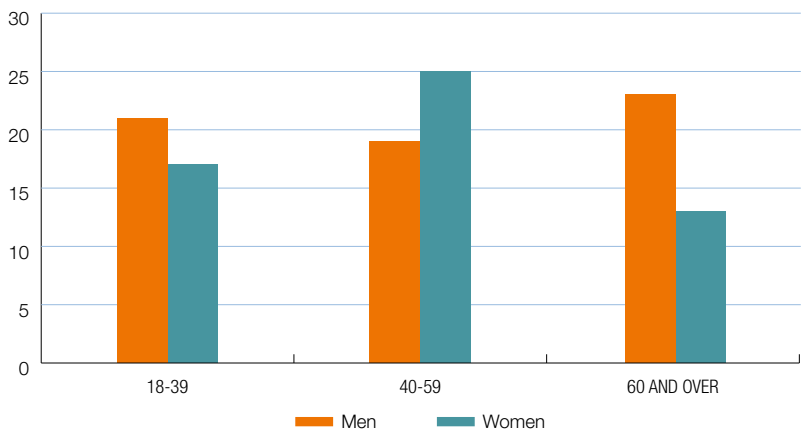
5.2.2. Other financial support provided to members of the network

As discussed above, the number of individuals who claim to have given money to members of their social network (non-coresiding members) to cover living expenses over the past five years (as a gift, not as a loan or in the form of alimony or child support) is three times greater than the number of those who claim to have received this form of support (20% compared to 6%). In most cases this type of support is occasional rather than regular (66%).

In contrast with those who have received support, those who have provided it do not fit a specific social profile; they do not present differences in terms of family situation, the size and composition of their social network, or in terms of social class or income levels. Only young emancipated adults and women over 60 years of age state they provided this kind of support less frequently (graph 5.4). This absence of a clearly defined social profile is due to the diversity of circumstances of those who have provided support as well as the diversity of linkages through which support flows.

GRAPH 5.4

Percentage of respondents that in the last five years have given money to members of their social network to cover basic expenses



Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The circumstances that compel individuals to give support are varied, but the most predominant are situations of economic hardship, often due to unemployment and business failure (37%) or from insufficient income (15%); although there are also cases in which parents pay for the education of their children who are studying in another city (7%) (table 5.11). In the latter case and during family crises, periodic regular support is predominant (two out of three cases), whereas in most other cases, it is occasional. Age does not affect the circumstances in which aid is provided, but it does

condition the amount. Among young emancipated adults, the amount of financial support tends to be smaller (46% under 1,000 euros) and occasional, whereas among the middle-aged, the amount tends to be higher (45% over 3,000 euros). Those over 60 represent an intermediate situation, and their support is generally occasional (75%) (table 5.12).

TABLE 5.11

Reasons for support provided to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

REASONS FOR THE SUPPORT	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Economic crisis due to unemployment, bankruptcy, etc.	37	40	33	46	34	**39**
Health problems	9	6	12	–	–	**7**
Paying for education	7	7	–	13	–	**7**
Family crisis: separation or death	–	–	–	5	–	**3**
Insufficient income	15	20	17	16	19	**17**
Other motives	34	26	29	24	40	**30**
Total responses	102	99	91	104	93	**103**
Number of cases	119	112	86	91	55	**232**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

TABLE 5.12

Amount of support provided to cover living expenses: In percentages

AMOUNT OF SUPPORT	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Less than 1,000 euros	29	45	46	30	29	**35**
From 1,001 to 3,000 euros	13	13	19	12	9	**14**
From 3,001 to 6,000 euros	16	8	12	16	9	**13**
From 6,001 to 12,000 euros	6	6	–	12	–	**7**
More than 12,000 euros	10	7	–	17	–	**9**
No response	26	21	20	17	40	**22**
Total	100	100	97	100	87	**100**
Number of cases	119	112	86	91	55	**232**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The link between the provider of this type of support and the recipient – in marked contrast to those who claim they receive this type of support and in contrast to the financial help provided for the purchase of a home – is not from parents to children; rather, collateral relatives have a relatively important presence, as well as other non-family members of the network (table 5.13). However, intergenerational support and in particular that provided to children is the most frequent support once children become emancipated;(1) therefore, this is the most dominant form of support provided by older persons. In contrast, among younger individuals support for siblings is predominant; although a considerable number also say they provide support to their parents. Support given to non-family members is relatively common (30%) and prevalent across the full age spectrum, although less common among older adults. Generally speaking, the flow of money to cover living expenses, analysed from the point of view of the provider, reveals a surprisingly heterogeneous profile, with no significant differences by sex.

TABLE 5.13

Link with the person that has been given support to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Parents	9	11	22	–	–	**10**
Siblings	12	17	26	10	–	**14**
Children	32	31	–	39	68	**32**
Other blood-relatives	15	11	15	13	8	**13**
In-laws	5	7	6	8	–	**6**
Friends	25	14	20	22	17	**20**
Other persons	7	13	11	10	–	**10**
Total responses	105	104	100	102	93	**105**
Number of cases	119	112	86	91	55	**232**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Regarding monetary support for purposes other than buying a home or covering living expenses, 11% of respondents say they have received this

(1) This type of support does not include child support payments.

form of support while 21% claim to have provided it. This, once again, demonstrates that support provided is recognized more often than support received. Men claim to have provided support more often than women, as do those who have emancipated children, with more support provided the more emancipated children they have. This kind of support is also more common in smaller towns than in larger municipalities. In addition, there is no appreciable pattern related to social class.

In general, and in contrast to what recipients say, those who provide this type of support say that it is more frequent to lend money than to give money (table 5.14). In the majority of cases, support is given to just one person (52%), but it is also relatively common for two (28%) or more (20%) people to benefit. The older the provider, the greater the number of recipients mentioned.

TABLE 5.14

Financial support provided at some point in life for expenses other than the purchase of a home or to cover living expenses: In percentages

	MAN				WOMAN			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Has lent money	20	13	11	16	8	11	10	10
Has given money	3	7	14	7	6	6	7	7
Has lent and given money	–	–	3	2	–	–	–	–
No, never	76	79	71	76	85	81	82	83
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	231	201	141	573	221	204	178	603

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

As evidenced by table 5.15, the circumstances that lead to support being provided are varied. A large percentage of cases are due to situations of temporary economic hardship (37%), and loans are the most common form of support provided (68%). Money to buy a car is also fairly common (25%), and in this case, a significant proportion of support is in the form of a gift (42%). Support to start a business accounts for 11% of the cases. The amount of support varies, and in many cases is estimated

to have been quite high: 35% of those who provided support after the year 2000 claim to have given more than 3,000 euros. Among younger people, the amounts tend to be lower than among those who are middle-aged, with the situation being more diverse among the oldest age group. In general, the higher the income level, the higher the amount of support. Loans tend to be smaller than gifts.

TABLE 5.15

Reasons for providing at some point in life financial support for expenses other than the purchase of a home or to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Economic crisis due to unemployment, bankruptcy, etc.	41	32	42	37	31	**37**
Health problems	–	–	–	–	–	**2**
Paying for education	–	–	–	–	–	**2**
Family crisis: separation or death	–	–	–	6	–	**3**
Moving to new home	–	–	–	–	–	**2**
Buying a car	21	29	29	23	21	**25**
Starting a business	9	14	8	14	12	**11**
Other reasons	30	24	29	21	33	**27**
Total responses	101	99	108	101	97	**107**
Number of cases	140	104	88	81	74	**243**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The link between the provider and receiver, as with all forms of financial support, is not restricted to direct family members, nor to intergenerational connections, as in the case of support received (table 5.16). Regarding other financial support provided, the beneficiaries of this exceptional support are more varied. In fact, one out of three beneficiaries is not a family member, in contrast with one out of four for support to cover living expenses and one out of five for help in buying a home; this is especially the case the younger the individual is who provides the support and with men. A longitudinal reading of the data might suggest that the greater

prevalence of aid to non-family members of the network the younger the provider is, implies a defamiliarization of solidarity. But in reality, this is due to the fact that younger individuals do not have emancipated children, upon which the solidarity of older adults turns. Women tend to provide more support to family members than do men, and men help friends and non-family members more than do women. In either case, financial support for non-family members primarily takes the form of loans (66%) more often than gifts.

TABLE 5.16

Link between those who provide and receive support for expenses other than the purchase of a home or to cover living expenses: In percentages, multiple responses

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Parents	6	4	11	–	–	**6**
Siblings	22	24	33	31	–	**23**
Children	24	41	–	36	61	**31**
Other blood-relatives	8	10	–	10	13	**9**
In-laws	8	6	11	9	–	**7**
Friends	38	22	38	30	25	**31**
Other persons	9	6	10	7	11	**8**
Total responses	115	113	113	123	110	**115**
Number of cases	140	104	88	81	74	**243**

Note: "–" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Siblings are also relatively frequent beneficiaries of this form of support, especially among younger persons, although not as frequently as non-family members. In these cases support usually takes the form of loans (60%). In contrast, among older respondents, children are the main beneficiaries, and siblings are mentioned less often than friends and acquaintances. This may be due to memory lapses more than to a trend toward the lesser importance of relationships among siblings. The preferred form of support given to children is a gift (70%) rather than a loan. Loans never have interest attached to them, whether for family members or non-family. Only 2% of those who have given money said they had received interest or expected to receive it.

5.3. International comparisons

How supportive in terms of financial support are families in Spain in comparison to other European countries? Is Spain as familist as stereotypes suggest? Or, on the contrary, is it in an intermediate position in terms of frequency and intensity of financial support exchanged, as was found regarding support with personal services?

Although there is survey data available, international comparisons are complex. We encounter the same problems as when attempting to compare the scope of support with personal services. The indicators used tend to consider only one aspect of financial support, when it can adopt multiple forms. In addition, the available data usually refers to intergenerational support – which is the most common – even though support actually flows in multiple directions. However, by using the same indicator, it is possible to make comparisons of the relative importance of financial support in different countries. The results are very contradictory. Given the great difference in scope between support given and received, we will first analyse support that parents receive from their children, and then the support parents provide their emancipated children.

According to the OASIS study, Spain has the highest proportion of persons 75 and over that receive financial support from their children, out of the six countries analysed in this study. This demonstrates the important role of children in the economic well-being of their elderly parents. While in Norway and Germany only 3% of the elderly state that they receive such support, in Spain the figure is over four times that, reaching 13% (Katz *et al*., 2003: 177). These differences are attributed to the strength of the welfare state in Norway and Germany and the strength of family ties in Spain. In general terms, Spain could be considered, therefore, a country where intergenerational economic support has greater importance than in other developed countries.

However, according to SHARE 2004, the percentage of persons over 50 who receive financial support (*e.g.* gifts or payments worth more than 250 euros) from non-coresiding children is very low in Spain (3%) and not very different from other countries, where it ranges from 1% in Sweden and France, 4% in Germany and Austria, to 8% in Greece. The actual amounts

of such aid vary from one country to another. Spain is in an intermediate position at 1,169 euros, with Austria and Sweden being on the lower end at 740 euros, and Italy at the other extreme with 3,230 euros (Albertini, Kohli and Vogel, 2007).

In Spain and Greece persons 75 and over do tend to receive more frequent support from their children (7% and 17%, respectively) than in the other countries in the study (less than 1% in Sweden and 5% in Germany – based on SHARE, 2004). However, as the percentage in Spain is not very high (7%) and not very different from that found in Germany (5%), it cannot be deduced that financial support of the elderly in Spain is very widespread.

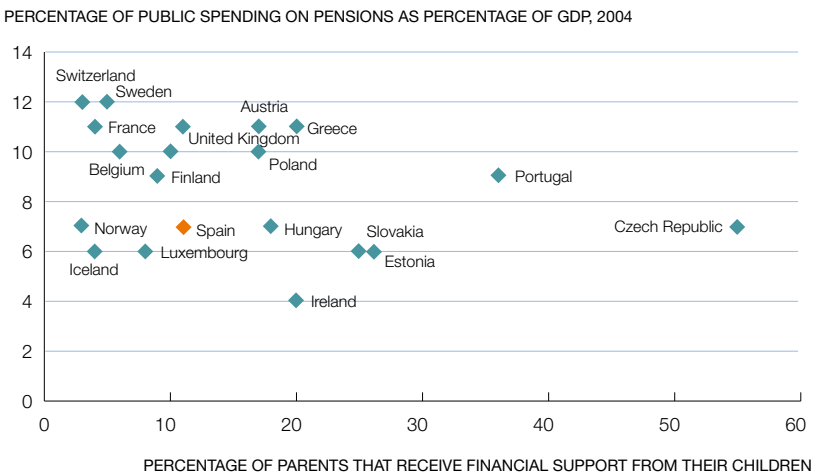
The European Social Survey (ESS, 2004) also enquired about the frequency of financial support received from non-coresiding children. It shows a much higher proportion of persons who say that they receive support from their children than the previously cited sources: Approximately 11% in Spain; approximately 3% in the Scandinavian countries, France and the Netherlands and around 50% in the Ukraine and the Czech Republic. The percentage in Spain is below the average and is similar to the United Kingdom (11%), which has a liberal welfare regime, and Germany (10%), with a conservative welfare regime. According to the ESS 2004, the population over 75 states that they receive financial support from their children much more often than those below that age in almost all countries. This does not alter the relative order of these countries, with this percentage being 18% in Spain, virtually the same as the United Kingdom (18%) and Germany (20%).

Overall, some Spanish parents receive financial support from their emancipated children, but the proportion is very limited. This support is not exclusive to Spain or the countries of southern or eastern Europe but is present everywhere, although its prevalence differs. The frequency of support given in Spain is similar to that of Germany and the United Kingdom, occupying an intermediate position among countries in regard to the frequency of support children provide to their parents, as shown in graph 5.5. Predictably, the likelihood of receiving financial support is inversely proportional to income level, both in Spain and in the vast majority of other countries, but the relative importance of this type of aid

is not directly related to the relative generosity of each country's pension system. As seen in graph 5.5, the lower the public expenditure on pensions, the higher the amount of intergenerational financial support. Despite this, the level of pensions only accounts for 11% of the variance. Lower levels of exchange of support occur in countries where there are great differences in terms of the generosity of their pension systems. This means that children do not compensate for their parents' low pensions, but for specific situations of economic need; 35% of Spanish parents who say they receive such help recognize that they have a lot of difficulty in meeting their monthly expenses, compared to 7% who say they have no such difficulty. These percentages are similar to those found in other European countries.

GRAPH 5.5

Spending on pensions as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product and frequency of financial support from children to their non-coresiding parents



Source: Compiled from data from the European Social Survey, 2005 and Eurostat.

Financial support given by parents to their children is more frequent than that which flows in the opposite direction, much like support in providing services. This has been referred to as "cascading" support (Attias-Donfut, 1995; Kohli, 1999; Szydlick, 2000; Nave-Herz, 2002). This is the case in

virtually all European countries as seen in graph 5.6, as the majority is located below the bisector. The scope of this support depends on the source used.

According to the SHARE 2004 survey, financial support to children ranges from 9% in Spain to a maximum of 32% in Sweden. The relative frequency of this support is related to the welfare regime. In countries with a social-democratic regime (*i.e.* the Scandinavian countries) the frequency is high, while in those with a Mediterranean regime it is low. Countries with a conservative regime are in an intermediate position (around 22%).

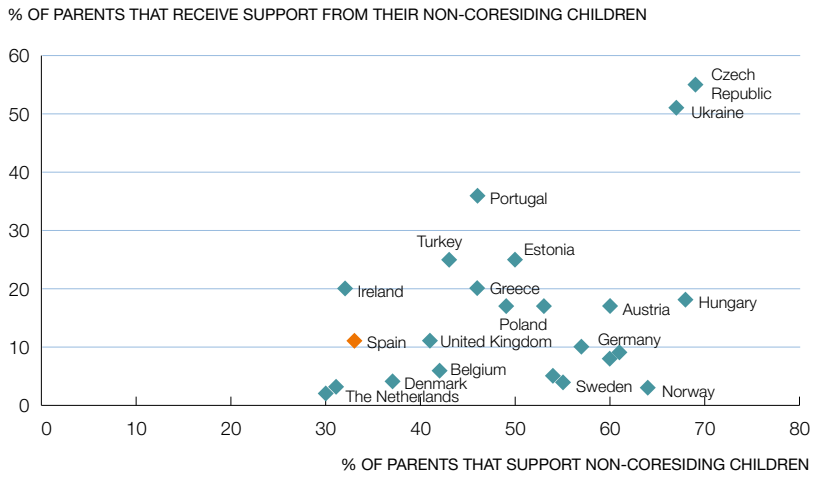
The ESS 2004 survey shows a much greater prevalence of aid from parents to non-coresiding children, but Spain at 33%, is still among those countries where the least support is provided.(2) This survey yields percentages that range from 31% in heterogeneous countries such as Switzerland, the Netherlands, Ireland and Spain up to 60% or more in Austria, Norway, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Ukraine. Although virtually all the Scandinavian countries are above the average, and the Mediterranean countries below, the north-south pattern is not as clearly identifiable as in the data from SHARE.

In principle, one could assume that relative frequency depends on when children leave the family home and become independent, but the data does not support this hypothesis. If we consider all countries in the sample, there is virtually no relationship between the percentage of parents providing support and the percentage of 18 to 29 year olds living in the family home, as the variance explained by the linear adjustment is less than 1%. If we reduce the age to 18 to 25 years of age, the results are the same. However, if we only consider Western countries, there is an inverse relationship, where greater delays in emancipation correspond to lower percentages of respondents stating they provide support, but the variance explained is only 9%.

(2) Given that the information gathered by the survey on this issue also includes child support that divorced parents pay for their children that do not live with them, the percentage is calculated based on the total number or married or widowed parents that have non-coresiding children.

GRAPH 5.6

Percentage of parents that provide economic support to their non-coresiding children, and of children that provide economic support to their non-coresiding parents. European countries



Source: Compiled from data from the European Social Survey, 2004.

In comparison with other countries, the extent of intergenerational financial support is low. The responses in both the ESS 2004 (graph 5.6) and the SHARE 2004 surveys confirm this. However, both these surveys only account for support provided in the same year as the surveys themselves, which underestimates the potential extent of the exchange of support, as the most common types of support are for purchasing a home or covering other exceptional expenses, which only take place in specific periods of an individual's life. In addition, both surveys focus only on intergenerational support, which is the most frequent but by no means the only kind of support. In any case, this data shows that monetary support is not as common in Spain as the familistic stereotypes of southern countries would suggest.

5.4. Individualization and financial support

In the previous chapter we analysed the possible effects of the different dimensions of the process of individualization on exchanges of support

with personal services in the family network in order to test the hypothesis of the weakening of this dimension of family solidarity and its dependence on the quality of relationships. In this section we want to analyse this hypothesis in relation to financial support. To do so, we will apply the same analytic strategy, but given that the extent of support received from children and siblings is very limited, there are not enough cases to do such an in-depth analysis as in the preceding chapter. Because of this we will focus on support received from parents and support given to non-coresiding children.

Regrettably, we do not have sufficient data to analyse the evolution over time of such support, as we only have available certain isolated indicators which are not comparable over time. The only data available is that provided by the SHARE survey in its 2004 and 2007 waves, which do not reveal any variations in Spain – not in the financial support given to children, nor in that received (calculations based on analysis of micro data). In addition, the time period covered by this survey is too short to appreciate changing trends.

Table 5.17 presents the results of the logistic regression analysis to examine the effects of the process of individualization on the probability of having receiving financial support. Financial support is understood as that which is provided to purchase a home and to cover regular as well as exceptional expenses; in other words, the three types of support examined. The values given in the table represent the estimated odds ratio between receiving and not receiving financial assistance from parents, influenced by the individualization index and various control variables.[3]

The results demonstrate that support received from parents and provided to emancipated children has not been negatively affected by the multiple dimensions of the individualization process.

The trend toward a reduction in family size has increased the probability of receiving support. Controlling for age and social class, this probability decreases as the number of siblings increases, although not linearly. The reason for this is that the greater the number of siblings, the greater

(3) In this case, instead of considering the phases of the family cycle, we have looked at age and having or not having children, as this type of support is not influenced by either the presence of grandchildren or age.

the competition for the same parental resources. Although support among siblings could compensate for this, the fact that siblings do not often provide support means that a reduction in family size does effectively increase the likelihood of receiving monetary support.

TABLE 5.17

Factors on which intergenerational financial support (in the form of a gift or a loan) depends, for the purchase of a home, for living expenses or other expenses. Estimated odds ratio of receiving support versus not receiving it, and of providing support versus not providing it

	RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM PARENTS		PROVIDING SUPPORT TO CHILDREN
Characteristics of the respondent			
Sex: female	0.91	Sex: female	0.89
Age	0.94***	Age	1.01
Number of siblings:		Number of children:	
1	0.43*	2	1.51
2	0.27***	3+	1.61
3+	0.26***		
Has sister(s)	1.34	Has daughter(s)	0.89
Has paid work	0.90	Has paid work	1.37
Has a partner	1.87	Lives alone	0.59
Has children	1.14		
Social class	1.28*	Social class	1.33**
Individualization index	1.41	Individualization index	0.80
Characteristics of the relationship			
Geographic distance	0.92	Geographic distance (1)	0.94
Emotional closeness	1.09	Emotional closeness (2)	0.92
Both parents living	1.34		
Mother's age	1.03*		
Number of cases	610	Number of cases	486
r2 Cox-Snell	0.08	r2 Cox-Snell	0.04

* Level of significance p≤ 0.05; ** Level of significance p≤0.01; *** Level of significance p≤0.001. (1) Geographic distance to the closest child. (2) Emotional closeness to the child with whom one feels most affinity.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

We do not see any relationship between number of children and financial support when we analyse the factors that the provision of parental support depends on. This is because the objective of such analysis is not the number of times support has been provided by parents, but rather if it has been provided or not. The data shows that a reduction in family size does not translate into less frequent support to children. Both the parents of only children and those of large families share the same probability of having provided support to a child either with loans or with gifts.

The sex of respondents and if they have sisters do not affect the likelihood of receiving support from parents, which shows that parents do not discriminate by sex when their children need money. The same is found when we analyse the support given by the parents. The presence of women in the structure of the family network does not condition the flow of financial support.

The probability of providing or receiving support is not affected by the erosion of the norms of family solidarity as measured by the individualization index, similarly to what we found with intergenerational support in the form of services. The interpretation is the same as that regarding support with services, namely, that there is a significant ambivalence in intergenerational relationships but strong norms of mutual support continue to condition behaviour. This is the case for support provided by parents, who do not usually deny their children support when needed if they are able to provide it, except in situations of extreme conflict. It is also true for received support; when money is needed to meet expenses, opinions can easily be left aside.

A similar interpretation could explain the absence of a clear relationship between emotional closeness to children and the probability of providing or receiving monetary support. Moreover, unlike support with services, which tends to be continuous over time, monetary support tends to be an isolated event. This means that the emotional closeness felt at the time of the interview may not be the same as when the support was given.

Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to argue that the process of individualization has eroded financial support between generations. The significant differences by age in support to buy a home (graph 5.1) also suggest that there is a trend toward increasing support being provided.

There are signs that support may have increased if we consider that the reduction in family size increases the probability of receiving support. It would be very interesting to know how the economic crisis has affected this scenario, but until the information collected in SHARE 2010 is available we will not have sufficient comparative data.

Unlike in the case of support with personal services, geographic distance between generations does not affect the probability of receiving financial support, as physical proximity is not necessary to provide this kind of support. This means that the geographic distribution of family members has no effect on an individual's possibility of receiving this type of support.

Lastly, it should be noted that financial support depends on social class, both for support provided to children and for support received.

5.5. General characteristics of exchanges of financial support

The exchange of financial support within kinship and friendship networks is not as widespread as support in the form of personal services, but an important segment of the population does say that they have received or provided money at some time in their life to a friend or a family member. Nearly a third of all interviewees (30%) say that they have received such support; the proportion rises significantly among younger individuals (40% of those under forty) and decreases among older generations (11% of those 60 and over). However, the percentage of individuals who state that they have provided support is significantly higher. Just under half of those interviewed (45%) say they have done so, and there are no appreciable differences by age. Therefore, it is younger generations and not older generations that are the main beneficiaries of financial support.

The majority of this support is isolated support, used to purchase expensive goods (housing, cars, etc.), set up businesses or to deal with situations of great financial difficulty. Support to cover daily expenses is less frequent. Only 6% say they have received such support over the past 5 years, but one out of five (20%) claim to have provided it.

The most common reason for financial support is to buy a home. Twenty per cent of those interviewed have received this type of support, and this

figure rises to 31% if we only consider those who have bought or built a home. Financial help to buy a home usually takes the form of a loan, almost always interest-free, or acting as a guarantor. It is usually a small amount compared to the value of the property; in most cases (60%) it is less than one quarter of the total value. Other forms of support for buying a home are less common, such as payment or co-payment of the down payment or the mortgage or giving land or property.

The second most common reason for financial support is for situations of financial difficulty due to unemployment or bankruptcy. Two per cent of respondents say they have received this kind of support, while 7% say they have provided it. The percentages are similar for purchasing a vehicle, with 2% saying they have received support for this purpose and 5% saying they had provided it. Support to start a business is not very widespread; only 1% say they have received this type of support and 2% say they have provided it, but that figure rises to 5% among those who are self-employed.

Support received comes from different members of the family network, but support from parents, much more so than in the case of services, is predominant. Parents, however, hardly receive monetary support from their children. Financial support within the family network generally functions in a "cascade" form. With the development of the welfare state and the social security system assuming responsibility for certain social risks instead of the family, financial support from children to parents has been socialized. As social security has come to be financed based on the principle of redistribution and not on capitalization, children do not give their retired parents money directly, but through their contributions to social security, which finances pensions.

The siblings, friends and relatives of the spouse are also mentioned, especially in forms of support other than for the purchase of a home, but less frequently (less than 20% of those that say they have received support). Overall, 20% of those interviewed say that they have received support from their parents, but only 4% from their siblings and 2% from their friends. However, when asked about who support is provided to, the flows are much more diverse; although children are the most common beneficiaries, they do not clearly predominate.

Parents do not favour one sex over the other, so women are just as likely as men to receive parental support in buying a home or other goods or in case of need. However, children do tend to support their mothers more than their fathers, as the support they give to their parents is heavily conditioned by parental income level, and older women, especially when they live alone, are more likely to suffer financial hardship. On the other hand, women tend to provide support to other members of their network less frequently than men (39% compared to 51%, $p \leq 0.001$), both for buying a home (16% compared to 23%, $p \leq 0.01$) and in situations of exceptional need (17% compared to 24%, $p \leq 0.01$).

However, overall we cannot conclude that women provide support in the form of personal services and men provide it as money. On the one hand, this is because a significant number of women say they have provided financial support, and there are men who say they have provided support in the form of personal services. On the other hand, the differences by sex in terms of providing financial support are not very large, and in the case of personal services these differences can be attributed to the type of help and the sources of data considered. While the differences in caring for the elderly are large, the gap is smaller when considering all types of unpaid support.

The probability of receiving financial support is conditioned by an individual's social class, both for support provided by parents and support from the network of family and friends. Help in buying a home or for other purposes is more frequent among the better-off classes than among lower socio-economic classes. If parents receive financial support from their children, it is because they lack resources and cannot meet monthly expenses. The probability of providing support is not closely associated with social class except in the case of support from parents to children.

Compared to other European countries, the scope of intergenerational support is not very high, which contradicts the stereotype of Spanish familism. The comparison offered suffers from an underestimation of the support provided, since it refers only to assistance provided in the year prior to the survey, and therefore, may not include support in the purchase of a home or for exceptional expenses. Still, the results are confirmed by both the ESS 2004 and the SHARE survey (waves 2004 and 2007). If we

look at financial support in terms of the practices of intergenerational co-residency and the relatively frequent support from parents in purchasing a home among the younger generations, we can conclude with Albertini, Kohli and Vogel (2007) that the primary form of family solidarity in the countries of southern Europe and Spain in particular, is intergenerational co-residency, rather than family support for the economic independence of the different generations.

This cannot be attributed to lower income levels in Spain compared to northern European countries because the level of intergenerational support in Spain is also much lower than that of Eastern European countries with lower income levels. On the other hand, it is also not related to the level of spending and the characteristics of the welfare state, since there is not a close relationship between support provided to parents and public spending on pensions. In addition, lower spending on social protection for the family should result in greater support for children, as a form of compensation, which does not happen. Rather, this is a cultural pattern regarding how family life should function. According to this cultural pattern, young people should not leave home until they have sufficient resources to finance an independent life.

The process of individualization does not seem to have led to a weakening of financial support between generations; instead, there is evidence to suggest that financial support may have increased. The reduction in family size has increased the probability of receiving financial support from parents, and this has been further facilitated by the significant improvement in the standard of living in recent years.

VI. Family solidarity and subjective well-being

The aim of this chapter is to examine another important aspect of family solidarity: How belonging to a network of family and friends and the sociability and exchanges of support within the network contribute to subjective well-being. But as relationships within the network have both positive and negative aspects, this chapter will also address the perception of overload that can arise from the demands for support from members of the network, as well as the conflicts that can arise within it.

We will look at three main types of well-being: economic, social and subjective or personal. Economic well-being refers to the amount of material or financial resources available for individuals or societies to meet their needs. Economic well-being is typically measured by the gross domestic product (GDP) or an individual's disposable income. Social well-being, or social welfare, refers to the redistribution of economic resources that occurs with the development of the welfare state, which aims to provide goods, services or income based on social criteria and not market criteria. In other words, these resources are obtained or provided below the market price provided that certain social conditions are met. While these two conceptions of well-being describe objective realities that societies control to help individuals achieve their life goals, personal or subjective well-being refers to the perceptions people have of their personal situation, not only their satisfaction with the resources they have, but also regarding other dimensions, such as how they feel about their goals and achievements.

Subjective well-being has no single definition; on the contrary, its conceptualization depends on disciplinary approaches and theories.

According to Diener (cited by Garcia, 2002), there are three main conceptualizations. On the one hand we can conceive of well-being as satisfaction with one's life, referring to overall satisfaction with life as well as to an assessment of satisfaction in different spheres in one's life (income, work, family, etc.). A second conception of well-being refers to a balance in which positive feelings outweigh the negative. The third conception is moral or religious in nature and refers to the attainment of happiness through living life according to a particular set of values.

In this chapter we refer to the first conceptualization; following Bohnke (2005), we consider subjective well-being as it is manifested in satisfaction with life and in feelings of happiness. While satisfaction with life consists of an individual's cognitive evaluation of his/her life, happiness refers to a person's feelings (Diener cit. by Garcia, 2002). Many tools have been developed to measure individual well-being, but one of the most widely used indicators in surveys – and which has proved its validity (Bohnke, 2005) – is a question which asks respondents to rate their level of satisfaction with life in general on a scale of 1 to 10. Suitably adapted, this indicator is also used to analyse satisfaction regarding multiple dimensions of social life (family, work, etc.) (Saraceno *et al*. 2005). Along with this indicator, it is also common to use another subjective evaluation, the degree of happiness an individual feels as measured on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "not happy" and 5 being "very happy". Although both indicators are biased toward positive assessments, as individuals may say they are happy and satisfied as a way of accepting the reality of their lives, many studies reveal these indicators to be sensitive to individuals' socio-economic and personal circumstances (Bohnke, 2005, Saraceno *et al*. 2005).

6.1. The formation of a family in individuals' life projects

When individuals are asked about the importance they attach to different basic dimensions of life such as health, work, leisure time, family, friends, religion or politics, family is always judged to be very important (table 6.1). It is true that these dimensions are central in everyone's lives and are, therefore, given a great deal of importance. But it is also true that they are evaluated differently, with health, love and money, for example, receiving

higher ratings than religion or politics. In the case of money, individuals tend to value the way it is obtained – through work – more than money itself, which stems from both social prejudices about money and the dimensions of sociality, individual ability and personal fulfilment associated with work. In addition, the relative importance attributed to these different dimensions is stable throughout the life cycle, which means that family occupies a prominent place among all age groups.

TABLE 6.1

Importance attributed to different dimensions of life[1]

	HEALTH	FAMILY	WORK	FRIENDS	FREE/LEISURE TIME	MONEY	RELIGION	POLITICS
18-39	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.2	1.9	2.1
40-59	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.2	2.1
60 and over	3.9	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.1	2.8	1.9
Total	**3.8**	**3.8**	**3.5**	**3.4**	**3.3**	**3.2**	**2.2**	**2.0**

Note: (1) Average value on a scale from 1 (no importance) to 5 (very important).
Source: Compiled from data from the CIS study 2.578 (2004).

Despite the profound changes in family life resulting from the process of individualization, the formation of a family has not lost its appeal as a vital objective of younger generations (Busch and Scholz, 2006; Meil, 2009; Ayuso, 2010). The majority of the population's acceptance of divorce does not mean that married life has ceased to be a widespread aspiration, but rather that the terms of marriage have been redefined. An increasing proportion of the population has come to consider that married life is not necessarily a commitment that must last a lifetime, but is seen as a continually renegotiated life project in which both parties have to work more or less permanently to meet the expectations of the other if it is to last. This fragility has not eliminated the desire to form a family that is stable over time, but it requires that both parties give more attention and dedication to the other and work harder to improve the quality of life together. Another consequence of the demise of marriage as a bond that should last a lifetime is that a break does not necessarily imply the renunciation of a second or successive life project with another partner; though for many it has meant that life with a partner has lost its attractiveness. In any case, the majority of the

population still searches for happiness, or at least satisfaction with life, among other ways, through finding a partner (Requena, 1996).

Thus, according to ERSS, 2007 and as demonstrated in the literature (Garcia, 2002; Bohnke, 2005), those who live with a partner (married or not) tend to show a higher degree of satisfaction with life than those without partners (8.5 compared to 7.9, $p \leq 0.001$). Although those without partners tend to adjust to this situation, finding satisfaction in other dimensions of social relations or in other dimensions of life. Overall, however, those without partners express negative feelings more often, and a higher proportion do not describe themselves as happy, especially among older generations.

Older persons who do not have partners feel alone, sad, unhappy or bored more often than those who do, although the widowed and separated or divorced adapt worse to the absence of a partner than do single persons (table 6.2). This is not only the case for older persons, but also occurs among the middle-aged. According to ERSS, 56% of those between 40 and 59 years of age without a partner say that they feel somewhat happy, a little happy, or not happy compared to 23% of those who have a partner.

TABLE 6.2

Feelings of older adults (65 years of age and older) based on marital status: In percentages

	SINGLE	MARRIED*	SEPARATED	DIVORCED	WIDOW/ WIDOWER	TOTAL
Bored	23	21	28	39	36	**27**
Not good, not happy	19	19	18	32	30	**22**
Sad	27	27	36	53	46	**33**
Lonely	37	11	45	58	46	**25**
Somewhat or not very satisfied with life	29	17	31	31	33	**24**
Number of cases	177	2,048	45	38	1,191	**3,500**

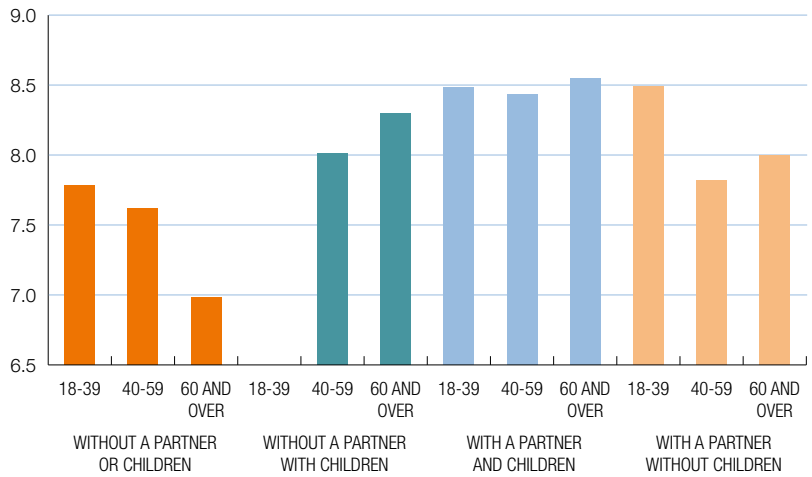
Note: Although civil status does not necessarily reflect if one has a partner, in the case of the older adults it most likely does. (*) Married or cohabiting with a partner.
Source: Compiled from data from the CIS study 2.647, Living Conditions of the Elderly, (2006).

Having children continues to form part of the aspirations of the majority of the population of childbearing age, despite the strong decrease in the birth-

rate and the substantial increase in women without children, resulting from the process of individualization (Delgado *et al*. 2007; Busch and Scholz, 2006; Meil, 2009; Ayuso, 2010). Thus, according to CIS study 2,529, almost all respondents (91%) believe that "seeing children grow up is the greatest pleasure in life", although having children is no longer considered essential for happiness. Only 31% (mainly the elderly) believe that those who "have never had children lead empty lives' (CIS, 2003; Cea, 2007). Among the younger generations, having children remains one of the primary aspirations in life. However, the decision to have a child is increasingly being postponed until after certain other life experiences (having "lived life"), as well as until individuals have sufficient material means (Meil, 2009). In the context of family planning as a social norm, children do not simply "arrive", but are "planned" and therefore, they are increasingly the result of a consciously pursued desire and part of a life project in which individuals expect to achieve happiness, or at least satisfaction in life through motherhood/ fatherhood (Alberdi, 1999). Thus, as explained in graph 6.1, those who have children tend to show a higher degree of satisfaction with life than those who do not, especially when they also have a partner.

GRAPH 6.1

Overall satisfaction with life, by family situation and age (1)



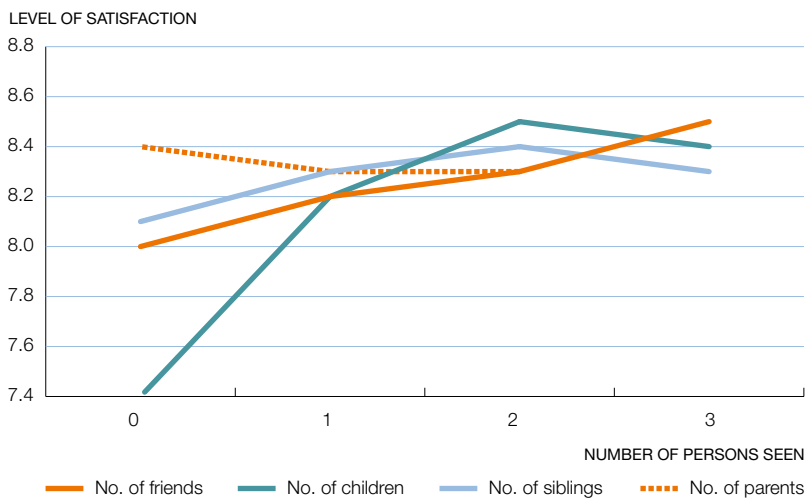
Note: (1) Average value on a scale from 0 (minimum satisfaction) to 10 (maximum satisfaction). Individuals with a partner or children, whether they live with them or not.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

6.2. Sociability, solidarity potential and subjective well-being

Belonging to family and friendship network also contributes to subjective well-being, both in relation to satisfaction with life, as seen in graph 6.2, as well as to feelings of happiness. Controlling for age, subjective perceptions of health and having a partner, those who have children, friends and siblings express greater satisfaction with life than those without. This is especially true among those who live alone and are 65 or older.

GRAPH 6.2

Level of satisfaction with life based on number of members in individuals' social network, by types of members (1)



Note: (1) Average value on a scale from 0 (minimum satisfaction) to 10 (maximum satisfaction). The level of satisfaction with life according to the number of children refers to persons 40 years of age or older, who in general have concluded their reproductive cycle; in the other cases, the reference population is those 18 and over who are heads of household or their partners.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

But a social network is important not for its mere existence, but because of the type of social relationships it generates (Saraceno *et al.* 2005). Specifically, a social network is important as a resource for the organization of leisure time, as a source of support when needed and for providing feelings of belonging; in other words, as one of the principal ways in which

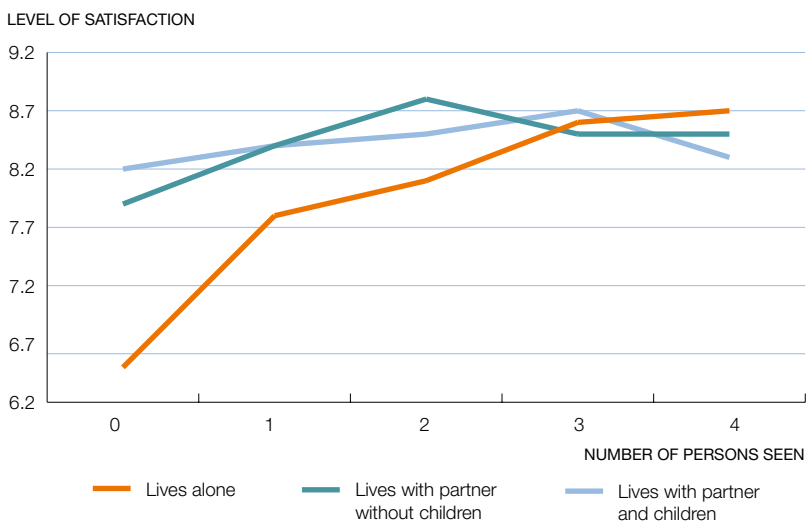
individuals achieve social integration. It is therefore of interest to analyse how sociability and the solidarity potential of a social network affect individuals' subjective perceptions of well-being.

6.2.1. Sociability and subjective well-being

We will begin by analysing the effects of the density of relationships on the indicators of subjective well-being. To do this, we have used the indicator of the density of relationships presented in chapter 3, which is the number of non-coresiding persons (parents, siblings, children, friends, etc.) the respondent spent some free time with during the two or three weekends prior to the survey. Our analysis also takes into account whether the person lives alone or not. The results are found in graph 6.3, which shows that those living alone, in general, manifested – unless they had a very active social life – less satisfaction with life than those living with

GRAPH 6.3

Level of satisfaction with life[1] based on number of categories of non-coresiding persons seen during the previous two or three weekends and by type of co-residency in the household



Note: (1) Average value on a scale from 0 (minimum satisfaction) to 10 (maximum satisfaction). The possible categories are grandparents, parents, siblings, children, in-laws, brother/sisters-in-law, other family, friends, neighbours and others.
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

a partner or family. The same pattern can be inferred regarding feelings of happiness (not shown). This is the case among the elderly (60 and over), but also among those who are younger, although among those under 40 years of age the differences are not significant. Widows living alone have lower levels of happiness than single or separated women, although their general satisfaction with life is the same, which may be interpreted to mean that they have a more positive evaluation of their life in the past, even though they perceive the present more negatively.

Spending free time with other persons with whom individuals do not live, not only contributes to their social integration, but also to their subjective well-being (Motel-Klingebiel *et al*. 2003; Saraceno *et al*. 2005; Bohnke, 2005; Katz , 2009). Thus, those who in preceding weekends had not seen anyone express levels of satisfaction with life and happiness significantly lower than those who had seen members of their network. The differences are striking when the person lives alone and particularly among the elderly, but also occur among those living with others and with greater intensity among the elderly.

TABLE 6.3

Level of satisfaction with life[1] and happiness[2] based on relationship with people one has seen in the two or three weekends prior to the survey and by age

	SATISFACTION WITH LIFE [1]				HAPPINESS [2]			
	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
Has not seen family or friends	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.6	2.9	3.7	3.2	3.3
Has seen friends but not family	8.2	8.3	8.8	8.3	4.2	3.9	3.9	4.0
Has seen family but not friends	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.4	4.2	3.8	3.7	3.9
Has seen friends and family	8.5	8.3	8.9	8.5	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.1
Total	**8.4**	**8.3**	**8.3**	**8.3**	**4.1**	**3.9**	**3.6**	**3.9**

Note: (1) Average value on a scale from 0 (minimum satisfaction) to 10 (maximum satisfaction). (2) Average value on a scale from 1 (not happy) to 5 (very happy). The persons seen are those with whom one does not live.
Source: Compiled from the ERSS 2007 survey.

The range of persons that respondents have seen is also somewhat relevant, as those who have seen persons with whom they have different types of relationships (friends or family) tend to feel a somewhat higher degree of subjective well-being. Thus, as shown in table 6.3, satisfaction with life and feelings of happiness are higher among those with a diversified network of contacts, which means that friends and family cannot substitute for each other. Therefore, frequent and diverse contact with both relatives and non-relatives is associated with a more positive assessment of life.

6.2.2. Solidarity potential and subjective well-being

As already mentioned, the contribution of the social network to individuals' subjective well-being is not only as a resource to meet individuals' needs for sociability, or to make leisure time more enjoyable, but as an important source of support or assistance in times of need. To measure the capacity for support that individuals receive from members of their network, the ERSS survey – following the model used in the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) – asked respondents if they had someone with whom they did not live that they could turn to if they needed help in the form of personal services, emotional support or a loan. Concretely, if they needed help with domestic tasks when ill; if they needed advice about a serious personal or family matter; if they were feeling a bit depressed and needed someone to talk to and; if they needed to urgently raise 1000 euros to make a payment.

In table 6.4 we show the distribution of responses by sex and age. From this we can see that not everyone believes that they can count on the support of members of their social network in case of need. In total, 40% of the population believes that they have no guaranteed support in the case of need in all of these dimensions. While the percentage of individuals that could not turn to anyone is very low, it is not negligible, as 2% of all respondents say they have no one to turn to, a percentage which doubles for those over 60 years of age. On average, respondents say they can receive support in 3.3 of the dimensions referred to; those that live alone indicate a higher number than those that live with others (3.5 versus 3.3, $p<0.5$). It appears as if it is more difficult to get support in the form of personal services than money. But even emotional support is not guaranteed in all

cases, although this could be due to reticence to ask for support in situations that are considered sensitive or very personal, rather than to not having close enough relationships to ask for this kind of support.

Family members are most often cited as the potential source of support in the case of illness or financial need. Very few respondents mention friends, and those that do say that friends help more frequently by lending money than by providing support that requires time and effort – as in the case of illness (13% and 26% respectively). Friends, however, are often mentioned, along with family members, in the case of advice or emotional support (47% and 53% respectively). Support from friends depends on the phase of the life cycle the individual is in. Among younger persons (below 40 years of age), parents are the source of support more often than siblings, above all in the case of illness (55% versus 40%) but not in the case of emotional support (43% versus 40%). Among older persons (65 years of age or more) it is children that are the primary source of support when they have them, while siblings are barely cited as potential sources of support.

The pattern by type of support is the same; children are more often mentioned as sources of financial support (85% of the time as opposed to 14% of the time for siblings) than in the case of illness (70% of the time versus 8% for siblings), needing advice (57% versus 18%) or emotional support (56% versus 19%). Therefore, young adults turn to their nuclear family of origin (parents and siblings) for financial support or help with personal services that involve time, and when they are older they turn to their children. Regarding seeking advice or emotional support, we find the same pattern; however, the percentage of individuals that say they would turn to friends is greater when they are younger. In contrast, when older, the perception that there is no one to count on for support is greater in all cases with the exception of illness.

Men tend to state that there are a greater number of dimensions in which they can receive support than women (3.3 versus 3.4, $p<0.05$), above all, in cases of illness or needing money (table 6.4). Individuals from higher social classes also say they can receive support more frequently and in more dimensions than those from lower social classes, both from family and from friends. Given the potential sources of support, those that have parents,

siblings, children and friends are more likely to receive support. Once we take into account the effects of social class, sex and form of family life, we see that among those less than 50 years of age, the probability of receiving support in three or four of the dimensions considered is greater when they have parents, siblings and intimate friends. Among those over 50 years of age, having children and friends are the principal factors which impact on the probability of receiving a lot of support, having siblings not being a factor.

TABLE 6.4

Percentage of those who state that they receive support in the dimensions of domestic support, illness, advice with personal and family problems, emotional support, and money for emergencies (1,000 euros)

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER +	TOTAL
% of the population that thinks they could receive support in case of [1]						
Illness	80	71	76	74	76	**75**
Need for advice	89	87	94	88	79	**88**
Need for emotional support	86	88	90	88	82	**87**
Financial need	86	82	88	86	78	**84**
% of the population according to the number of dimensions in which they think they could receive support						
Can receive support in all four dimensions	63	56	66	58	51	**60**
Can receive support in three dimensions	23	25	20	26	27	**24**
Can receive support in two dimensions	9	11	10	10	11	**10**
Can receive support in one dimension	4	5	2	5	7	**4**
Cannot receive support in any dimension	1	3	2	1	4	**2**
	100	100	100	100	100	**100**

Note: (1) The difference up to 100 of each percentage is the percentage of persons that state they could not receive support in the corresponding dimension; so that if 80% of men state they could receive support in case of illness, the remaining 20% state that they will not.
Source: Compiled from the ERSS 2007 survey.

In comparison with other countries and according to the data from the EQLS 2007, the percentage of persons that state that they could turn to family in case of need in Spain (both family with whom they co-reside and family with whom they do not) is among the highest in Europe. Thus, the percentage that state they could turn to someone in the family for the four types of support considered ranges between 54% and 28%, leaving Spain with the highest percentage (54%, somewhat lower than the percentage obtained in the ERSS). We find similar results if we consider this percentage or that of those who say they can receive support in three dimensions (graph 6.4). In the EQLS, respondents were asked not only about the potential support from persons with whom they did not live, but also from persons with whom they did live; this partially distorts the results because one would assume that the main reference for potential support will be family members with whom the respondent lives. However, if we look only at individuals that live alone, we see that these respondents on average state that there are fewer dimensions in which they can receive support (an average of 2.1 dimensions for all the countries in the survey, versus 3.1 for respondents that live with other persons), but Spain with an average of 2.9 for persons who live alone is situated among the countries with the highest number of dimensions cited (the average ranging from 1.5 to 2.9).

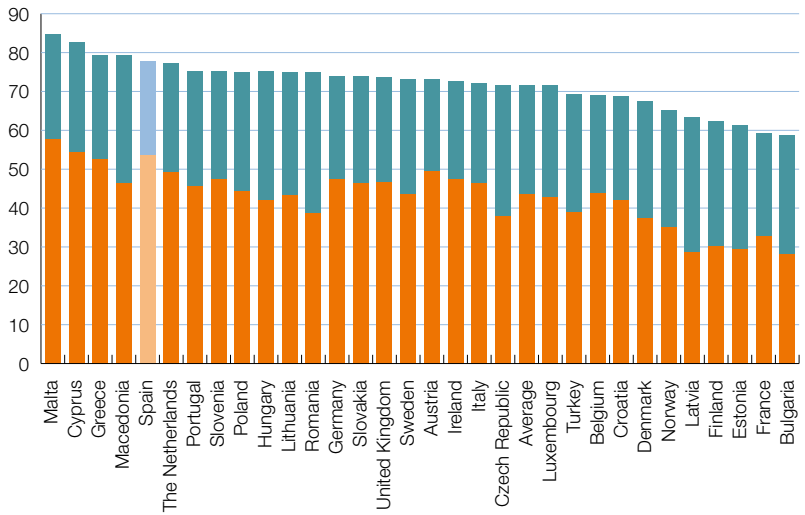
As we found when analysing support received and support provided, in this source of data we do not find a relationship between welfare regime and the scope of family solidarity, given that the potential levels of solidarity are very similar, if not equal, in countries with liberal, conservative and Mediterranean regimes, including even the most emblematic social democratic welfare regime (Sweden). This data also corroborates that the process Esping-Andersen (1999) referred to as the "defamiliarization" of the welfare state, does not have to generate the erosion or *crowding out* (Kunemund and Rein, 1999) of family solidarity, at least not in regard to support that does not require a significant investment in time.

In the introduction we formulated the hypothesis that, as a consequence of changes in the family generated by the process of individualization, family networks lose their capacity to provide support and their reliability. In light of the results, we cannot state if there has been an erosion of the family as a source of support because we do not have comparative data

over time,[1] however, the data analysed suggest that the family continues to be considered by the majority of the population as the main source of support in case of financial need or the need for personal services when individuals do not turn to the market or the government.

GRAPH 6.4

Percentage of persons that can count on support in three (lower part) or four (upper part) different types of solidarity in Europe



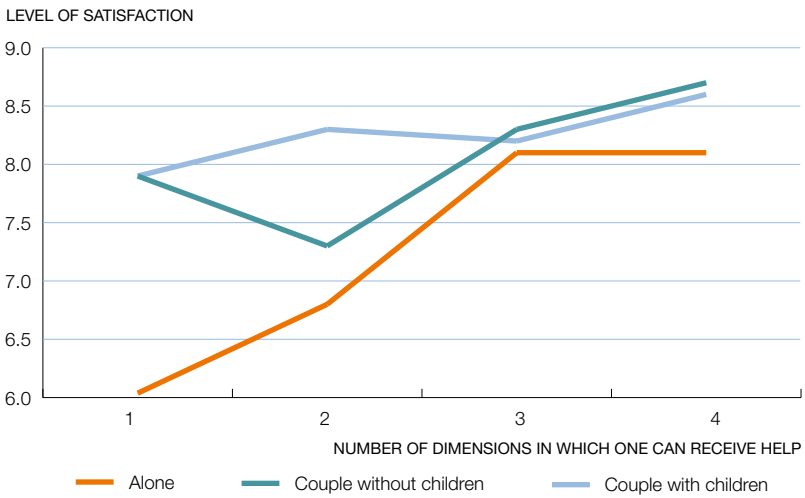
Note: There are four types of support considered: Support in case of illness, need for advice, moral support or economic support.
Source: Compiled from data from the EQLS (2007).

The absence of or limitations in the capacity to ask for support in case of need is negatively associated with individuals' subjective well-being (graph 6.5) as the social network constitutes "social capital", in Coleman's sense (1990). In other words, solidarity potential is a resource that individuals have to achieve their objectives, and lack of that potential is an obstacle to their achievement.

(1) The European Quality of Life Survey was carried out in 2003 and 2007, but the time elapsed is too short to deduce trends over time.

GRAPH 6.5

Level of satisfaction with life[1] based on number of dimensions in which one can turn to someone in case of need and by type of co-residency in the household



Note: (1) Average value on a scale from 0 (minimum satisfaction) to 10 (maximum satisfaction).
Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Just as the absence of sufficient economic resources or health problems negatively affect well-being, the absence of sufficient "social capital" in the case of need also limits individuals' satisfaction and happiness in life. As the number of dimensions in which persons can receive support from a member of their network increases, so does their satisfaction with life, as indicated in graph 6.5. The same pattern can be seen with the indicator for degree of happiness.

This increase in subjective well-being is found among both those who live with other persons and those that live alone, although it is more intense among the latter. The increase is more intense among persons who are separated than among those who are single, and somewhat more moderate among the widowed. The greatest declines in indicators of subjective well-being are found not only in function of the number of dimensions in which potential support is lacking, but also in function of the type of support required. In this sense, the lack of social capital

that can provide emotional support in situations of need is more closely associated with less satisfaction in life (7.6 versus 8.4; p≤0.001) than the absence of the possibility of obtaining personal services (8 versus 8.4; p≤0.001) or financial support (7.9 versus 8.4; p≤0.001). Ultimately, and depending on the economic situation, these resources can be bought on the market, whereas it would be difficult to obtain emotional support in the market or through social services.

6.3. Overload from demands for support

The ability to get support from the members of the network is important for individuals' well-being, but it may or may not be for those who are providing the support. Sometimes those who help say that being able to provide support to others gives them greater satisfaction than being recipients of support. In fact, young people especially complain about being so dependent on the support of their parents and other members of the network.

To explore the extent to which there is an overload in demands for support, respondents were specifically asked about this issue in both the Social Networks and Social Support survey (ISSP, 2001) and our Social Networks and Solidarity survey. The question formulated in the latter survey was: Do you think that family or friends ask for your help too often? The possible responses were: "no", "yes, sometimes" and "yes, often". The proportion of persons that feel overloaded by the demands they receive from the members of their social network with whom they do not live (14%) can be considered limited, given the frequency of support provided (only 24% have not provided any type of support with personal services in the 12 months prior to the survey and 48% have done so in two or more different dimensions). The assessment made of this overload is also not very negative: only 3% think that they receive too many demands (table 6.5).

There is no clear socio-economic profile of the persons that feel overloaded or overwhelmed by family solidarity, as there are no significant differences according to sex, age, family situation or social class. Nor is the size of municipality of residence relevant. The size of the network also has no

impact, but the frequency of support provided does, so that the greater the number of dimensions in which support is provided in the form of personal services, the greater is the sense of being overloaded. Although the accumulation of demands is more likely to generate a sense of being overloaded, not all forms of support have the same impact.

TABLE 6.5

Feeling of "solidarity overload": Responses to the question, "Do you feel that your family or friends ask for support too often? By sex and age

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
No	87	84	86	83	88	86
Yes, sometimes	10	12	11	13	8	11
Yes, often	3	4	4	4	3	3
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Thus, help in caring for children (17% versus 13% when they do not help care for children, $p \leq 0.05$), help in caring for dependent persons (21% versus 13%, $p \leq 0.05$), and financial support to cover everyday expenses (14% versus 18%, $p \leq 0.05$) are the dimensions which are most likely to lead to a feeling of being overloaded.

TABLE 6.6

Feeling of solidarity overload based on amount of time dedicated to looking after non-coresiding children (grandchildren, nieces/ nephews, etc.)

	DOES NOT LOOK AFTER CHILDREN	OCCASIONALLY/ SOMETIMES DOES	LESS THAN 10H A WEEK	MORE THAN 10H A WEEK	TOTAL
No	87	81	93	77	86
Yes	13	19	7	23	14
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Number of cases	813	211	89	60	1,173

Source: Compiled from data from the ERSS 2007 survey.

In the case of caring for children, it is not the activity itself which generates a sense of being overloaded, but the frequency and intensity with which it is carried out (table 6.6). When the care is occasional, there is no sense of being overloaded, but if it is done regularly, it is more likely that such a feeling will emerge, especially when the person spends many hours per week doing it. Although the vast majority of individuals that dedicate a lot of time to looking after non-coresiding children (most commonly their grandchildren) do not feel overwhelmed by the demand for support, there is a significant percentage (one out of four) that do.

Regarding providing care for the elderly, it has been widely shown that there are many factors – length of the relationship of care, the time and effort involved, the type of dependency and characteristics of the disability, the bond that unites the individuals involved and the subjective evaluation that they make of the caregiving relationship, among others – that can generate feelings of being overloaded and affect the caregiver in multiple dimensions of his/her life (professional, within the family, personally, etc.) and, therefore, affect his/her level of well-being (Crespo and Lopez, 2007; Rogero, 2010).

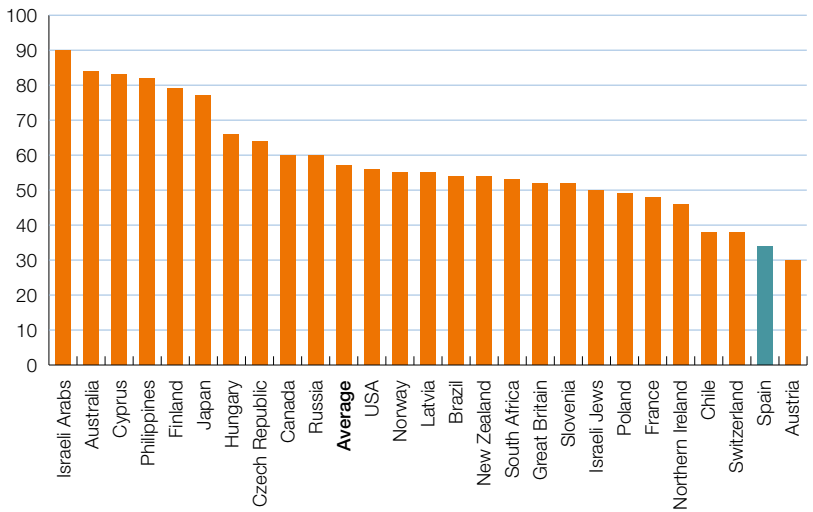
But the contribution made in caring for dependent persons takes a multitude of forms, both in regards to time and to the activities in which support is provided. In the ERSS, one of every four persons that state they help dependent persons consider themselves to be overloaded by demands for solidarity (21% versus 14%), a percentage much higher than in the rest of the cases, although evidence that not all persons that state that they help in the care of dependent persons feel overloaded. Depending on the type of support that is provided, the probability of feeling overloaded is higher or lower. The types of support that generate the greatest sense of being overloaded are support with hygiene and domestic tasks, in contrast with accompanying the dependent person to the doctor or on a walk, or supervising their medication.

In comparison with other countries, the perception in Spain that the demand to provide support is too great, according to the results obtained from the Social Networks and Social Support survey (ISSP, 2001), is very low (graph 6.6). In fact, along with Austria it is the lowest among the countries analysed. In this respect, it is necessary to emphasize the notable

difference with the results from the ERSS, 2007 (33% versus 13%). Given that the formulation of the questions on this issue is not exactly the same and that the contexts in which the questions appear are different, the responses are not strictly comparable. Therefore, it is not possible to conclude that there has been a decline during the first decade of this century in the percentage of persons who feel overloaded by demands for support.

GRAPH 6.6

Percentage of persons that state that «they feel their family, relatives or friends demand too much from them» in the ISSP project participating countries, 2001



Source: Compiled from the Social Networks and Social Support survey (ISSP), (2001).

6.4. Conflicts within social networks

A high level of contact among members of a social network and a widespread practice of mutual support would suggest that relationships among the members of a network are good. However, this does not mean that there are not also sources of friction which occur over time among members of kinship and friendship networks or with acquaintances,

friction which can lead to more or less severe conflicts, even on occasion leading to physical or emotional violence, or, without reaching such extremes, the rupture of relationships. In this context we will address the issue of intense conflicts within social networks, but not the phenomenon of domestic violence.

Within a marriage or a partnership, family relations constitute one of the most frequent motives for friction between partners (Meil, 1999). Along with the division of domestic tasks and the care of the children, relations with other family members is one of the issues which regularly creates conflict between partners, more so than differences over money or ideological differences, which are generally unusual. These conflicts occur more often when couples are young, have young children, and have to affirm their authority and the educational model they follow in raising their children in the face of what is interpreted as interference from other members of the family network. The parents of either partner may be involved in these conflicts, though as the children get older and the grandparents become elderly or die, the friction between the couple related to family matters becomes, by and large, less frequent.

Obviously, couples do not only have conflicts with each other regarding their relationship with their family; they also may have conflicts with other members of the family network or with members of their broader social network. The motives are not limited to the "interference" of grandparents in the raising of their grandchildren, but can be related to multiple issues, among which can be cited conflicts over inheritances, assistance and care of dependent family members, support in different situations of need, differences over worldviews, lifestyles, drug addiction, etc. These are conflicts of differing severity and reach, but they are far from uncommon; even the most severe conflicts are not that rare in most individuals' lives.

Thus, according to the ERSS, one of every five respondents (22%) has had a heated and angry discussion with someone in their social network in the year prior to the survey. Men tend to argue heatedly more often than women (25% versus 20%, $p \leq 0.05$), and younger adults more often than older ones (table 6.7). No statistically significant differences are found based on social class. These arguments happen, above all, with blood relatives and particularly in relationships between parents and children or between

siblings. Thus, two of every three respondents (68%) that have argued have done so with a member of their blood family, in comparison with one of every ten that have done so with a member of their family by marriage. This cannot be interpreted as meaning respondents have a better relationship with their in-laws than with their own families, as it may just mean that there is greater distance, less emotional closeness and greater restraint in relations with in-laws.

TABLE 6.7

Percentage of persons that in the 12 months prior to the survey have had a heated argument with a member of their social network: Multiple responses

	MAN	WOMAN	18-39	40-59	60 AND OVER	TOTAL
With no one	75	80	63	81	93	**78**
Parents	4	5	10	3	–	**5**
Siblings	7	6	8	8	1	**6**
Children	–	1	–	–	2	**1**
Other blood-relatives	6	4	8	4	2	**5**
Parents-in-law	–	1	1	–	–	**1**
Other in-laws	1	1	2	–	–	**1**
Friends	7	3	10	3	–	**5**
Other persons	1	1	1	–	–	**1**
Total responses	101	102	103	99	98	**103**
Number of cases	574	604	452	405	321	**1,178**

Note: "-" indicates fewer than five cases.
Source: Compiled from the ERSS 2007 survey.

Among young people arguments with parents are common, while middle-aged adults tend to argue with siblings and older adults with their children; although the elderly, due to the "intergenerational stake" (Bengston and Kuypers, 1971) tend to give less importance to disagreements and not to categorize them as heated arguments, as shown by the large difference between the percentage who state they argue "with their parents" and those that state that they argue "with their children". In general, considering all ages, the highest relative frequency of conflicts occurs with siblings, as one of every four respondents has argued with a sibling. Heated

arguments do not happen exclusively within the family, but also between friends, above all, among young people, but they disappear with age, among other reasons because in contrast to the family and particularly close family, friendships are based on liking each other and getting along, and when this disappears, the relationship typically ends.(2)

The complete rupture of a relationship with a member of the social network is not unusual, although not typical either, as 29% of the respondents stated that they no longer talk to someone in their circle, whether family or friends. The ending of a relationship happens more often with individuals that are not family members than with family members, and more often with blood relatives than with in-laws, probably because control over the relationship with in-laws is low and depends on the attitude of the spouse/partner. Within the family, when a rupture occurs, it is most often with siblings rather than with older generations. In addition, men tend to end relationships more frequently than women (32% versus 27%, $p \leq 0.05$), and age is not particularly relevant in this case, although persons 60 years of age or over end relationships less frequently than those under 60 years of age (18% versus 33%, $p \leq 0.05$). Differences based on class or size of municipality of residence are not statistically significant.

(2) There are also heated arguments in the workplace, but these are not covered in the survey we are analysing.

Summary and conclusions

As is well-known, family life has undergone profound changes in recent decades. We have tried to synthesize the characteristics of these changes and the social process behind them through the concept of individualization. With this concept we want to emphasize the change brought on by the loss of traditional social control over individual life projects and the corresponding gain in individual autonomy in making decisions on issues related to the family, among other areas. Options that do not follow inherited models are no longer questioned and stigmatized. This loss of social control and the subsequent gain in autonomy, which defines the individualization process, is behind the main changes in the family, namely: The decrease in the birth-rate and the significant decline in the size of the family – the result of the "empowerment" of women and the change in the definition of gender roles within and outside of the family; the disappearance of the patriarchal family and the emergence of the negotiating family; the pluralisation of forms of family life and the spread of "new" forms of family.

How has the process of individualization affected family solidarity? Have the norms of family solidarity been weakened? Has mutual support among members of the family network been weakened? Or, on the contrary, is family solidarity still an important source of individual well-being?

It is often argued that the level of family solidarity in Spain is very high, and that this is because the welfare state has not developed sufficient social services to end women's primary role in providing support (especially in the care of dependent family members). The development of the welfare state, which has focused on improving pensions and health care rather

than on the development of services that "defamiliarize" family care, would then be related to the strength of family solidarity in Spain. In other words, due to the type of welfare state that has developed in Spain, the process of individualization has hardly affected patterns of family solidarity, even as other dimensions of family life have undergone profound changes.

Family solidarity is a complex social reality composed of different elements. As with all systems of social relations, it is composed of individuals who occupy social positions (father, mother, spouse, child, etc.), which give rise to specific social relationships defined by the individuals but also subject to social norms. Analytically, we can distinguish different elements in this social reality: First, the different social positions defined in relation to each other (father, mother, son or daughter, spouse, sibling, etc.); second, norms that define the rights and responsibilities of the individuals occupying the different positions, as well as norms that regulate the relationships between the individuals in different positions; third, patterns of relationships among those that occupy the different social positions, which involve the use of free time and the exchange of support in the form of services or money; and fourth, a sense of belonging to a community of individuals that form a unit, an "us", referred to as family and which is symbolized, among other ways, in the sharing of a family name. Bengston and Roberts (1991) distinguish six different dimensions in the sphere of family solidarity: Normative solidarity (social norms), structural solidarity (composition, geographic proximity of family members), associative solidarity (contacts), affectual solidarity (emotional closeness and belonging), functional solidarity (support in terms of services or money) and consensual solidarity (agreement in values, attitudes and opinions).

The effects of changes in the family resulting from the individualization process are different in each of these dimensions; for this reason they have been analysed separately in each of the chapters of this book.

Individualization and norms of family solidarity

The Spanish population in all age groups continues to identify with the social norms that establish the obligation of providing mutual support

between generations in case of need. This identification is much more widespread in Spain than in other Western European countries, although it is similar to that found in Eastern European countries. Thus, 56% of respondents in Spain can be categorized as "familists" because they believe that the different generations should help each other financially in case of need, children should co-reside with dependent elderly parents when they can no longer live alone, and that grandparents should help take care of grandchildren when the parents cannot do so; this is in contrast to only 32% in Germany and 30% in France who share these beliefs.

This does not mean, however, that important changes are not taking place in the norms of family solidarity in Spain. The fact that the proportion of individuals categorized as familist is 56% and not higher demonstrates that there is a high proportion of individuals with ambivalent feelings in this regard, although there are very few who reject outright the norms of mutual support between generations (6%). Moreover, the high degree of identification with the norms of mutual support between generations does not mean that the family continues to be considered the only institution responsible for the care of dependent persons or the only source of financial assistance for individuals with economic difficulties. A trend toward the redefinition of the norms of family solidarity can be seen in two areas: On the one hand, the market and the state are becoming increasingly important in the provision of welfare/well-being and, on the other hand, the care of dependent family members has come to be perceived as the shared responsibility of both women and men.

Regarding the care of children we are witnessing a change in attitude. It is no longer desirable to overload grandparents with the responsibility of taking care of their grandchildren; day-care centres are often preferred by parents over care provided by other family members, above all among younger parents. Thus, only 49% of parents with children under three years of age, in comparison to 68% of the rest of the population, believe that "the grandparents should take care of their grandchildren when the parents cannot do so", and 51% of adults under 40 years of age believe that "it is better to take the children to a day-care centre than to turn to grandparents or other family members". Help from grandparents is generally seen as

emergency support, more than as a resource to balance work and family life. Regarding the care of the elderly, the involvement of social services in their care is also increasingly accepted and demanded. There has also been an increase in the purchase of services on the market (*e.g.* caregivers, home assistants). This is not seen as a substitute for the family but as complementary to it. Thus, 82% of the population thinks that "the care of elderly parents is not only the children's problem, but also involves the society and the state". In addition, 45% of those over 64 years of age think that it is the government, or the government along with families, that should care for and assist the elderly, compared to 48% who think that it is the family exclusively, or the family with some help from the government, that should provide this care. However, identification with the norm of generations co-residing when the elderly can no longer live alone is widely accepted: 68% of the population thinks that "parents should live with their children when they can no longer live alone". Regarding financial support, the preference for turning to financial institutions before family is an additional sign of a change, in which the role of family solidarity is becoming secondary.

However, the economic crisis and its impact on employment, financial markets and public finances have led to a loss of trust in the capacity of the welfare state or the market to provide support when needed. As a result, we have seen an increase in identification with the norms of mutual support among members of the family in the case of need. In other words, in times of crisis the family is considered a bastion of support that must be strengthened. But this does not mean, in our opinion, that the process of redefining the norms of mutual support – which increasingly view family support as a form of emergency support rather than as a resource for individual well-being – has reached its end.

Individualization and the restructuring of family networks

The consequences of the individualization process on the structure of family networks and the geographical location of its different members have been important. Its effects on fertility decisions, along with the increase in life expectancy, have profoundly transformed the structure and composition of family networks. Increasingly, parents and parents-in-law are living longer, and the number of children in the family is decreasing

(although this trend seems to have come to a standstill); this has produced a verticalization of family networks.

Eighty two percent of the population forms part of a family network comprised of at least three generations. However, the gradual decline in fertility has led to a decline in the number of siblings from generation to generation. Both processes are generating a kinship network structure that can be characterized visually as a "beanpole structure": Many generations but few members in each generation. This trend has contributed to the likelihood of there being no women in the family network to assume the roles women traditional carry out as facilitators of contact and the exchange of support within the family network.

The effects of individualization on co-residency patterns have also been important and even surprising. While in the countries of north and central Europe, individualization is associated with the early emancipation of children from their parents' home, in Spain and other southern European and eastern European countries the effects seem to have been the opposite. The end of the patriarchal family model and the development of the negotiating family have led to adult children remaining in their parents' household for an increasingly longer amount of time, as they have greater autonomy to negotiate (implicitly more than explicitly) the terms of co-residence. The result has been that the age of emancipation has been increasingly delayed, although since the mid-1990s this trend has slowed. In 2008, 67% of young adults from 18 to 29 years of age in Spain lived with their parents, in contrast to around 30% in Scandinavian countries and 52% in the countries of central Europe. In any case, the emergence of the negotiating family has encouraged this form of family solidarity, so that the emancipation of young people has, in general, become easier allowing young people to move out without losing the standard of living they have had in their parents' household.

In addition, the individualization process has also furthered the practice of "intimacy at a distance" in the living patterns between the elderly and their emancipated children. The different generations tend to live in independent but geographically close households for increasingly longer periods of time, while maintaining frequent contact; an eventual regrouping does occur but at increasingly older ages. The proportion of

older persons that live alone or that do not live with their children is growing; however, Spain, along with other countries of southern and eastern Europe, is characterized by having a relatively high proportion of the very aged that live with one of their children. In Spain, 22% of the elderly over 75 years of age live with a child, compared to approximately 10% in Germany and the United Kingdom and under 5% in the Scandinavian countries. In this regard, residential solidarity between generations continues to play an important role in Spanish families, so that the tendency toward intimacy at a distance cannot be interpreted as an erosion of the patterns of family solidarity, but is rather a redefinition of them.

When the different generations do not live in the same home, they tend to live near each other. Although the reduction in the size of the family makes it more likely that the few children there are will live further away and that, therefore, there will be a tendency toward the dispersion of family networks, there are no signs of a geographic distancing between generations. The distance today between emancipated children and their parents is no greater than it was for their parents' generation. In addition, siblings also tend to live near each other, so that the vast majority of the population has all or at least some of its blood relatives (parents, children or siblings) living nearby. Thus, 68% of emancipated children live less than 5 kilometres from their parent's home, while in Scandinavian countries and in France this percentage is around 40%.

Individualization and sociability

In Spain, sociability within the network is very high, both in terms of face-to-face contact and telephone contact. Despite methodological problems in measuring the effective scope of the density of contacts (as individuals tend to state a higher frequency of contact than is real), comparative data with other countries – using the same indicators – also reveal that sociability between members of the network is very high in Spain. In fact, it is higher than that found in other countries, although there are also European countries with a higher density of intergenerational contacts. If in Spain, 64% of individuals see their non-coresiding parents at least once a week, 87% their emancipated children and 53% one of their siblings, in

a heterogeneous group of countries, among which are found the Scandinavian countries and countries of central Europe, these percentages are 53%, 67% and 35% respectively.

This high level of sociability exists with both members of the family network as well as with friends. The importance of family sociability compared to that of friendships in the organization of free time essentially depends on the stage of the life cycle. Young people share free time and leisure with their friends, though as they age and, above all, form their own families, family sociability acquires increasing importance. Thus, among those that do not have children or a partner and that do not live with their parents, only 36% say that they see their family more than their friends; among those that have a partner but no children the percentage increases to 54%, and among those that have children and a partner the percentage is 78%. Having children or grandchildren encourages family sociability and in particular intergenerational relationships.

Based on comparative data over time, we do not see a decline in intergenerational sociability due to the growing process of individualization in society and the deinstitutionalization of family life, not in Spain or in other neighbouring countries. The percentage of Spanish respondents that say they see their mother at least once a week was the same in 1994, 2001 and 2007 – around 74% ; the percentage of parents who saw their emancipated children once a week in 2001 was the same as in 2007 – around 85%.

The primary role that women play in sociability within family networks also does not seem to have eroded as a result of the individualization process and the corresponding redefinition of women's social and family roles. Women continue to have more frequent contact with their families than do men. The most significant difference is in regard to telephone contact: 55% of women whose parents are living say they speak with them on the telephone every day, while only 37% of men say they do. In addition, while 64% of women say they have seen someone in their family with whom they do not live during the weekend prior to the survey, in the case of men this percentage is 54%. These percentages show that the decline in the size of the family negatively impacts intergenerational sociability as it increases the probability of not having daughters as well as the possibility

that they may live far away, which translates into longer periods of time between face-to-face contact.

Emotional closeness has become increasingly important in fostering both face-to-face and telephone contact. This is especially true in sociability among siblings, but also in intergenerational relationships, so that when there is emotional distance or when the relationships are not very close emotionally, contact may not be broken (except in extreme cases), but there tends to be greater time between visits. Thus, 78% of those who feel close to their parents emotionally (a score of 7 or more points on a scale of 1 to 10) speak to their parents on the phone more than once a week, compared to 55% of those who do not feel as close to their parents (below 7 points). The same is true for visits; 37% of those who feel closer emotionally to their parents (7 or more points) had spent some leisure time with them on the weekend prior to the survey, compared to only 9% of those who feel more distant from them. In this regard, the process of increasing individualization has weakened the institutional dimension of family sociability, with the dimension of choice gaining in importance. Thus, members of the family network are forced to invest time, energy and social skills to maintain family sociability, if this is what they desire.

The logic of the development of the negotiating family has spread, therefore, not only from parents to children, but has reached outside the home to include non-coresiding members of the family network. In other words, the process of the deinstitutionalization of the family, stemming from individualization and the emergence of the negotiating family (which have led to the need for partners to invest greater time and energy to maintain a common life project and to avoid separation), has extended to other relationships in the kinship network. These now also require greater time and effort to maintain. More and more the functions inherent in kinship are fulfilled based on choice and affinity, and less and less based solely on social norms related to blood ties or marriage.

Individualization and exchange of support in services and money

The provision of support is so widespread among members of the network that only 24% acknowledge that they had not provided any support with personal services in the 12 months preceding the survey; that is, three out

of four had done so, and one in two (49%) did so in two or more different dimensions. However, the frequency with which this occurs is not perceived as being so high as to generate a high level of overload. In fact, only 14% complain of having to provide too much assistance to the members of their social network.

The percentage of those who recognized having received some form of support in the form of personal services during the year prior to the survey was slightly lower than those who said they had provided support (65% compared to 76%).

Support is received in the early phases of independent living, especially in the early stages of the family life cycle – two out of three families with children under three years of age received some type of support and more than one in two when the children were from three to six. This decreases as people get older, but increases again during old age, mainly when individual autonomy to carry out the activities of daily life decreases.

The type of support received depends on the phase of the lifecycle. In the early stages of the family life cycle, support is primarily for childcare, but also for home repairs. More common in old age is assistance in managing bureaucratic affairs; however, when there is dependency, support is dedicated to taking care of daily activities. Considering broad age groups, young people (under 40 years old) receive more support than the elderly (60 or over) (75% compared to 60%), with no differences by sex.

Support comes not only from parents, but from multiple sources, depending mainly on the stage of the family cycle and the type of support received. The intensity or frequency with which someone receives support depends on the specific bond that unites members of the network. In general, support that is more time-intensive or frequent is usually intergenerational, while occasional support comes from a wider range of members of the social network: parents, children, siblings, parents-in law or brothers and sisters-in law, as well as friends and neighbours. In this regard, the probability of receiving support depends on the size of the network, as well as on the members comprising it. Specifically, the probability of receiving any kind of support for those with no siblings is

less than for those with siblings. In the case of childcare, the probability of receiving support is less for individuals that do not have sisters.

The decline in the birth-rate as a result of the process of individualization increases the probability of there not being children, siblings and especially female members within the immediate family network and, therefore, the probability of not receiving support. Friends can act as functional equivalents of the immediate family, but analysis of the flows of support received demonstrates that although having close friends is important in terms of receiving support, this does not compensate for the lack of close family such as parents, children or siblings.

As has been noted, individuals recognize providing support more often than receiving it. Overall, according to the ERSS 2007 and the ESS 2004, the percentage of respondents who provided some form of support (76%) did not differ based on sex, though there were differences by sex related to the specific type of support provided. Women tend to help more often with housework and with care of children and dependent adults, while men help with household repairs and transport, although the differences are limited. Regarding age, young emancipated adults (88% of those under 40 years old) and the middle-aged (82% of those between 40 and 59 years old) provide support more frequently than older generations (52% of those 60 and over say they provided support), although in the case of childcare, it is the grandparents who provide the most support.

The percentage of grandparents taking care of grandchildren has grown substantially over the past decade from 15% in 1993 to 25% in 2006 (grandparents 65 and older). This is probably due to the greater involvement of women in the labour market, but also to the greater involvement of grandfathers; although the percentage of grandmothers who say they take care of their grandchildren has also grown. Twenty-seven per cent of grandparents aged 65 to 75 years of age, without significant differences based on sex, say that they help in looking after their grandchildren at least several times a week, if not every day. This percentage decreases to 10% among those over 75 years of age.

The recipients of support with personal services are very diverse; in other words, children are not the only recipients of this type of support, nor is

childcare the only kind of help offered. Siblings, friends, and neighbours are often recipients of support, especially when temporary or occasional rather than habitual. In this regard, it should be noted that siblings do not appear to be the primary recipients of support and, in fact, are mentioned less frequently than friends, which reveals the influence of individualization. The primary recipient depends on the type of support: Dependent care is devoted mainly to parents or parents-in-law; home repair assistance is given more to friends or siblings; help with domestic chores is mainly for parents or parents-in-law, while occasional help with home repairs, shopping or transport is given to friends or neighbours. Thus, 62% of those who have helped in household chores have provided this support to parents or parents-in-law; 42% of those who have helped with domestic repairs and 33% of those who have helped with the shopping or providing transportation have done so for friends.

Financial support among non-coresiding family members is much less widespread than support in the form of personal services, even when the period considered is extended and does not only refer to the year before the survey. The most frequent reason given for providing financial support is for the purchase of a home: 30% of respondents who claim to have bought or built a house acknowledge having received financial help, with no differences based on sex. This percentage rises to 40% among those under 40, compared to only 12% among those over 60. The huge difference by age in the percentages of persons who state they have received financial support suggests that individualization and improvements in the standard of living and income level of parents – who, in the majority of cases, provide the support – appear to have led to the strengthening of family solidarity in this area, as has also happened with childcare. There are many forms of financial support received, but the predominant forms are interest free loans of a limited amount, and to a lesser extent, the guaranteeing of loans. If we consider the support received, it is primarily intergenerational, whereas if we consider the responses of those who state they have provided support, the main recipients are siblings and friends when the support is provided by younger generations, and children, when the support is provided by older generations.

In addition to support for purchasing a home, there are other types of financial support, including loans to purchase other goods or services, gifts or financial help with normal daily living expenses. The percentage of individuals who recognize having received such help is much lower than the percentage who say they have given it. While 6% state having received financial support with daily expenditures, the proportion who state they have provided support for this purpose is 20%, and those who report having received other financial help is 12%, compared to 22% who state they provided this help. The recipients of support say that it has come mainly from their parents, and those who provide support mention a wide range of people they have given support to. If the providers of support are young, they mention friends and siblings as recipients in the same proportion, whereas if they are older, they primarily mention children. It is noteworthy that older parents are barely mentioned as recipients, which shows that financial flows between generations take the form of a "cascade" from older to younger generations.

The comparison with the frequency of support in other European countries shows that the exchange of support in Spain is not as intense or widespread as is commonly perceived. This is the case with financial support and with personal services. For example, the percentage of parents who acknowledge receiving "financial support" from non-coresiding children in Spain is 11%, which is the same as in the United Kingdom (11%) and Germany (10%). The percentage of children who say they receive financial assistance from non-coresiding parents, although much higher (33%), is at the lower end of a range that goes from 31% to 60%. In terms of "domestic help and the care of dependent persons" (the elderly or children), the percentage of Spanish parents who help their children is 27%, which is near the lower end of a range from 22% (in the Netherlands) to 58% (in the Ukraine). The proportion of parents who say they receive such support (20%) is also well below the levels in many other European countries, where the percentages range from 10% (in Denmark and the Netherlands) to more than 50% (in the Ukraine, Slovakia and Estonia). Grandparents, however, when they take care of grandchildren, tend to do so with a frequency slightly higher than found in central and northern European countries.

The relative position of Spain on a scale from providing "a lot of support" to "little support" depends on the sources and the indicators used, but in no case is this support particularly widespread and intensive. In general, there is no clear and consistent north-south pattern in the frequency and intensity of the exchange of support between generations.

The fact that the welfare state in Spain has not led to the "de-familiarization" of services related to the care of dependent persons does not mean that family support is more frequent and intensive than in countries where this has occurred (primarily the Scandinavian countries). Looking at co-residency patterns among the different generations within the general framework of intergenerational solidarity leads to the conclusion that the pattern of support in Spain is primarily characterized by generations living together, rather than by the exchange of support between households. In short, the provision of support is common in Spain, though it is generally occasional and more in situations of emergency, rather than regular. Only in relatively rare cases does support involve the intensive provision of care in terms of time.

This does not mean that as a result of the process of individualization, family networks have weakened and become less reliable. Increased involvement of grandparents in childcare (more occasional than regular, as noted) and increased frequency of financial support for the purchase of a home for younger generations suggest otherwise. Questions about the possibility of receiving support should it be needed in different circumstances also do not point to a loss of reliability of family solidarity, as parents, children and to a lesser extent siblings appear as potential sources of support. Rather, the logic of support shows that when family members live in separate homes, each must try to resolve his or her own problems and not burden other family members.

Social networks and subjective well-being

Despite the pluralisation of forms of family life and that those who choose not to have a partner are no longer stigmatized, forming a stable partnership and having children continue to be widespread ideals among the population.

The process of increasing individualization, which has sparked such profound changes in family dynamics and in the social and individual meaning that individuals give to the family project, has not eroded this aspiration, not among older generations or younger ones. When relationships are satisfactory, the family project contributes decisively to individual well-being, and both the absence of a partner and children tend to generate, in aggregate, lower levels of happiness and satisfaction with life. The lack of a life project with a partner also more frequently generates negative feelings towards life, even more so when one has lost his or her partner and when, with age, the possibility of forming a new partnership slips away. The formation of a family contributes significantly to the subjective well-being of individuals when they are satisfied with their family project, without implying that those who have failed to do this cannot find satisfaction in life.

Besides the formation of a family, having a relatively large and diverse social network also contributes to individuals' subjective well-being. In general terms, having members of the various categories of closest kinship in one's family network is associated with greater satisfaction with life, although there is no direct relationship between the number of members (beyond two) and the degree of satisfaction. In this regard, the quality of relationships rather than the number determines the satisfaction derived from relationships with members of the network so that the greater the emotional closeness with parents, children or siblings, the greater the perception of subjective well-being. Having close friends (and the number of them) is also positively associated with greater satisfaction with life and greater happiness. Overall, therefore, it is having a varied social network, rather than an extensive one, which contributes to individuals' subjective well-being. In addition, it is the quality of relationships, in other words, the emotional closeness that has been established, which generates well-being, and not the type of bond that brings people together.

The social network is also important to individuals' subjective well-being because of the type of social relations it leads to, in particular, for being a resource for social integration, for the organization of free time and as a source of support when needed. Thus, those who in recent weekends had not seen anyone in their network presented levels of life satisfaction and

happiness significantly lower than those who had spent time with members of their network; this is particularly the case for those who live alone and are older. The perception of subjective well-being is higher among those with a diverse network of contacts, as friends are not a substitute for family or family a substitute for friends. Frequent and varied contact with relatives and non-relatives is associated with a more positive assessment of life.

The second most important function filled by social networks is providing support to its members when needed, which greatly affects individual well-being. Although all individuals are part of a social network with varying degrees of density, not everyone has the same potential support and solidarity. In fact, the percentage of individuals who can count on the support of their social network in four basic aspects of life (illness, financial need, advice and emotional support) is only 60%, although those who have no one to turn to in case of need is below 2%. Solidarity potential is related to the structure of networks, and more than the size of the network, depends on the individuals who compose it. Thus, among those in the initial or mid-stages of independent living, the solidarity potential depends on whether they have living parents, siblings and close friends, while for those who are in the later stages of the life cycle, solidarity potential depends mainly on having children, close friends and neighbours with whom they maintain close ties. Therefore, the potential for solidarity depends mainly on having a diverse network, composed of different types of bonds and not limited only to family relationships or friendships. The greater the potential to receive support, the greater the satisfaction with life and the more frequent the feelings of happiness. This is especially the case (but not exclusively) for those who live alone and are older.

The provision of support can also create overload, given the widespread frequency with which exchange of support occurs between members of the network. However, the proportion of people who feel overburdened by the demands they receive from their network is limited: Only 14% feel overloaded and only 3% actually feel that the demands they receive for support are too great. This perception is much lower than in other countries, even lower than in those in which the density of the exchanges is not so widespread. The type of support that tends to generate feelings

of being overloaded are those which are time and effort intensive, such as taking care of children and the dependent elderly, as well as providing financial support for non-coresiding family to meet their daily living expenses.

The effects of exchanges of support within the social network on individuals' subjective well-being are not only positive. Social networks, and particularly family networks, can also be a source of distress. On the one hand, there is domestic violence, which particularly harms women, children and the elderly. On the other hand, intense conflicts and disagreements also tend to occur within individuals' social networks. Twenty-two per cent of respondents had had a heated argument with a member of their social network in the year prior to the survey. Most conflict is within the immediate family and particularly with parents (7% of those whose parents are alive), more so than with emancipated children (2% of those with emancipated children), or with siblings (7% of those with siblings). A complete break in relations with a member of the social network is not unusual, but it is not common; 29% of respondents say that they are not speaking to someone within their network, whether family or others. The rupture of a relationship occurs more often with non-family members of a network than with family, and more often with blood relatives than with in-laws. Within the family, this happens with siblings more often than with ascendant relatives.

As a final conclusion it should be noted that despite the widespread perception that society is increasingly individualistic and that family solidarity is eroding, our analysis shows that this is a false stereotype about family life. The socio-economic and cultural changes of the recent past, far from eroding family solidarity, have led to a change in its form and content, which should not be interpreted as a weakening of family ties or family solidarity. Moreover, there are indicators that show an increase in support to children, as is the case with grandparents looking after grandchildren or with parents providing financial support so their children can purchase a home.

Non-coresiding family, however, is not and does not function as a sort of "supermarket supplying free unlimited services". Beyond situations of special need in times of crisis, the family of origin is primarily a form

of "reserve capital" to which individuals can turn when there are no acceptable alternatives on the market for goods and services or from the state. And this "reserve" character in times of need is what increasingly characterizes family solidarity.

Family sociability remains strong throughout the family cycle and, to the extent that it does not lose its importance, family networks will continue to function as reserve "social capital" in situations of need, while acting as an alternative or complementary resource or one of last resort when the market or the system of social protection fails. However, individuals must invest time and effort to maintain family sociability and to ensure that the relationships established are satisfactory.

Just as industrialization did not destroy the family, but instead restructured and redefined it, the socio-economic changes of recent decades understood and described in individualization theory are not destroying family solidarity.

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Glossary of Acronyms

EQLS: European Quality of Life Survey
www.eurofound.eu.int

ERSS: *Encuesta Redes Sociales y Solidaridad* [The Survey on Social Networks and Solidarity]
www.uam.es/gerardo.meil

ESS: European Social Suvey
www.europeansocialsurvey.org

GSS: Gender and Generations Survey
www.ggp-i.org

ISSP: International Social Survey Programme
www.jdsurvey.net

SHARE: Survey on Health, Ageing and Retirement
www.share-project.org

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Methodological appendix

Survey on Social networks and Solidarity 2007

Universe: Households in Spanish peninsular territory, the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands.

Persons interviewed: The persons to be interviewed were the principal breadwinners or their spouses or partners. To control for possible distortions in the data a quota of 40% male respondents and 60% female respondents was established (men made up 38% of the final sample and women 62%).

Sample selection: The sample was randomly selected based on the proportional size of the municipalities of residence. For each sample point telephone numbers were randomly chosen electronically from the telephone directory. In this way representation of the different socio-economic levels of the population were guaranteed. To complete the 1,200 interviews, distributed among Spain's autonomous communities, 26,425 telephone calls were made, of these many of those called rejected interviews and others postponed them, while other interviews were incomplete or abandoned. In total, the average was 22 calls for each satisfactorily completed interview.

Interview technique: Computer assisted telephone interviews through the CATI system. The average time to respond to the questionnaire was 30.4 minutes.

Field work: The field work was carried out by a team of 52 interviewers from the Metroscopia Company between 21 November and 28 December 2007.

Sampling error: The research has a maximum margin of error of +/– 3.16% under conventional statistical conditions of p=q=50% and with a confidence level of 95.5%.

Weighting: To correct for biases in the final sample obtained, a weighting coefficient was calculated based on the population distribution provided by fourth quarter Survey of the Economically Active Population in 2007, when the interviews were carried out. The variables to calculate the weighting coefficients were sex, age and education level. All of the values presented correspond to weighted results.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the persons interviewed: Once the sample was weighted, 51% of the respondents were women and 49% were men. Thirty-two percent had primary schooling, 17% had university studies and 51% had completed secondary school. Regarding age, 38% of respondents were between 18 and 49 years of age, 34% were between 40 and 59 years of age, and 27% were 60 years of age or older. The older population is, then, under-represented, which means that the problem of the dependency of the elderly is not sufficiently addressed by the survey; therefore, it has been necessary to turn to other sources. The immigrant population is also represented in the sample, although the percentage is below that occupied in the total population (6.4% of the interviewed were born outside of Spain, when the actual percentage of those born outside of Spain in the total population was, at the beginning of 2008, 13%). This under-representation happens in all telephone surveys, as many immigrants do not speak Spanish or have a rudimentary knowledge of the language, in addition, they may not have a fixed telephone.

Eighty-one percent of those interviewed have partners, but only 75% live with their partners, while 15% live alone. Seventy-three percent have children, although 28% of those with children do not live with them. The percentage of individuals without partners and with children is 11%; those without children or partners, independent of whether they live alone or not, make up 13%.

The respondents are divided proportionately geographically. Twenty-seven percent live in municipalities with less than 10,000 inhabitants, and 15% in municipalities of more than 500,000 inhabitants. The most

populated autonomous communities are, logically, most represented, but the size of the sample does not permit the data to be disaggregated by region.

Definition of the variables created: In the text patterns of solidarity are often analysed according to social class. Social class is a theoretical construct to analyse the structure and dynamic of the population with no universally accepted definition. In this case we have used the common operationalization carried out by survey research firms, a scale from 1 (lower class) to 5 (upper class), which identifies membership in a social class based on the position of the person in the household that contributes the most income. This position is defined based on a combination of variables: education level (eight categories) and occupation (22 categories).

The questionnaire for the Survey on Social Networks and Solidarity 2007 is available on the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid website at www.uam.es/gerardo.meil, section on Estadísticas del Cambio Familiar. The data files are available to researchers upon request (gerardo.meil@uam.es).

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Gerardo Meil

(*) English version available on the internet

The profound changes the family has undergone in recent decades have been part of a broader social process of individualization. Through this process individuals have gained a greater capacity to determine their own life projects, which are no longer primarily defined by models inherited from the past. Individualization is behind the changes in women's social roles, the fall in the birth-rate, the disappearance of patriarchy, the emergence of new forms of family and the appearance of the negotiating family. The objective of this study is to look at the scope of the effects of individualization on patterns of family solidarity.

To do this, five major aspects of family solidarity are analyzed: Norms regarding mutual support among members of the family network; support in the form of services or time; financial support; the composition of the family network, and the geographic distance between members and the patterns of contact among them.

Among the questions this study attempts to answer are the following: What is the scope of family solidarity in Spain and what forms does it take? Is contact among family members more frequent in Spain than in other countries? Who provides more support: older or younger generations? The results challenge stereotypes regarding the family in Spain and reveal that individualization has transformed the norms and practices of family solidarity.

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