

**Carolin Thoennissen, Angelika Guglhoer-Rudan, Sabine Walper
(LMU Munich)
& Eugenia Scabini (UCSC Milan)**

**YOUNG ADULTS' LIVING ARRANGEMENTS,
THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS
AND WELL-BEING
IN GERMANY, ITALY, AND SWEDEN**



1. Theory

- Young adulthood
- Cultural Differences
- Individuation

2. The Munich Individuation Test for Adolescence

3. Project & Sample

4. Results

- residential arrangement by country
- individuation problems
- economic insecurity
- depressiveness

5. Discussion



Young Adulthood:

Important developmental tasks :

- ✓ individuation in relationship to parents
- ✓ Partnership / family formation
- ✓ career development

(Havighurst, 1950; Newman & Newman, 1987; Olbrich & Brüderl, 1998; Schmidtchen, 1992)

Problematic:

- ✓ extended economic dependence
- ✓ high unemployment rates: Germany 10%; Sweden 18.2%, Italy 21.8% (eurostat 2008)
- ✓ prolonged co-residence

(Goldschneider & DaVanzo, 1989; Graber & Dubas, 1996; Reitzle, 1999; Scabini, 2006)



Cultural Differences :

- ✓ age at & reasons for home-leaving, economic circumstances, and residential arrangements after home-leaving
(Bernardi & Nazio, 2006; Rusconi, 2006; Iacovou, 2002; Schizzerotto, 2003; Vogel, 2003; Mills, 2006)
- ✓ ***“family welfare regime”*** with respective patterns like “famiglia lunga” in Italy vs.
 - ✓ ***“institutional welfare state”*** in Sweden
(Berthoud & Iacovou, 2003; Esping-Andersen, 1990; Vogel, 2003)



Individuation:

✓ Development of autonomy while maintaining related

(Allen et al., 1994; Blos, 1966; Walper 2003; Youniss & Smollar, 1985):

➤ **Relatedness**: sympathy, loyalty, mutual support

➤ **Autonomy**: becoming independent from thoughts and intentions of others

□ emotional autonomy

m autonomy of behavior

v cognitive autonomy

m economic autonomy

✓ Individuation is a developmental task in adolescence as well as in early adulthood



Munich Individuation Test of Adolescence

(Walper, Schwarz and Jurasic, 1996; Walper, 1997, 1998)

- ✓ Based on the
Separation-Individuation Test of Adolescence (SITA)
(Levine, Green, & Millon, 1986; Levine & Saintonge, 1993)
→ but strongly revised
- ✓ 6 scales measuring
 - ✓ successful individuation
 - ✓ specific individuation problems
- ✓ for mother, father, best friend and romantic partner



MTA Dimensions	
Successful individuation	4 Items, e.g. <i>Even if we argue, we like each other</i>
Fear of love withdrawal	5 Items, e.g. <i>When I have disappointed my mother, I am anxious that she loves me less</i>
Support seeking	4 Items, e.g. <i>I would like to experience a lot of things together with my mother</i>
Ambivalence	5 Items, e.g. <i>Sometimes I have the feeling that I like my mother more than she likes me</i>
Engulfment Anxiety & Fear of Control	6 Items, e.g. <i>I would prefer it if she wasnt so clingy</i>
Denied Need of attachment	4 Items, e.g. <i>Idont care what she thinks about me</i>

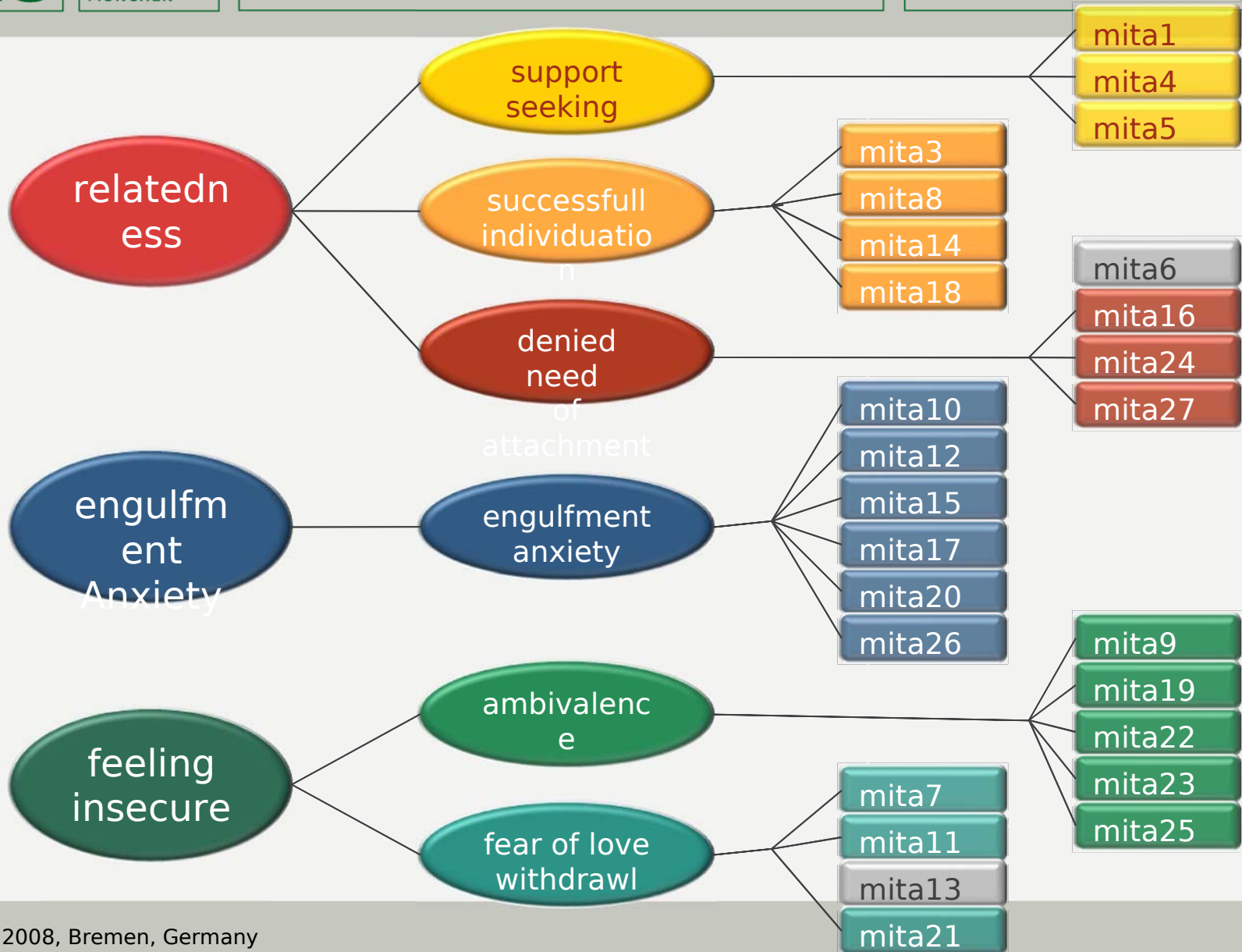


MTA Dimensions	
Successful individuation	4 Items, e.g. <i>Even if we argue, we like each other</i>
Fear of love withdrawal	5 Items, e.g. <i>When I have disappointed my mother, I am anxious that she loves me less</i>
Support seeking	4 Items, e.g. <i>I would like to experience a lot of things together with my mother</i>
Ambivalence	5 Items, e.g. <i>Sometimes I have the feeling that I like my mother more than she likes me</i>
Engulfment Anxiety & Fear of Control	6 Items, e.g. <i>I would prefer it if she wasnt so clingy</i>
Denied Need of attachment	4 Items, e.g. <i>I dont care what she thinks about me</i>
Expected rejection	6 Items, e.g. <i>She doesnt want to understand me</i>
Autonomy	4 Items, e.g. <i>If we have different opinions, I mostly concede</i>



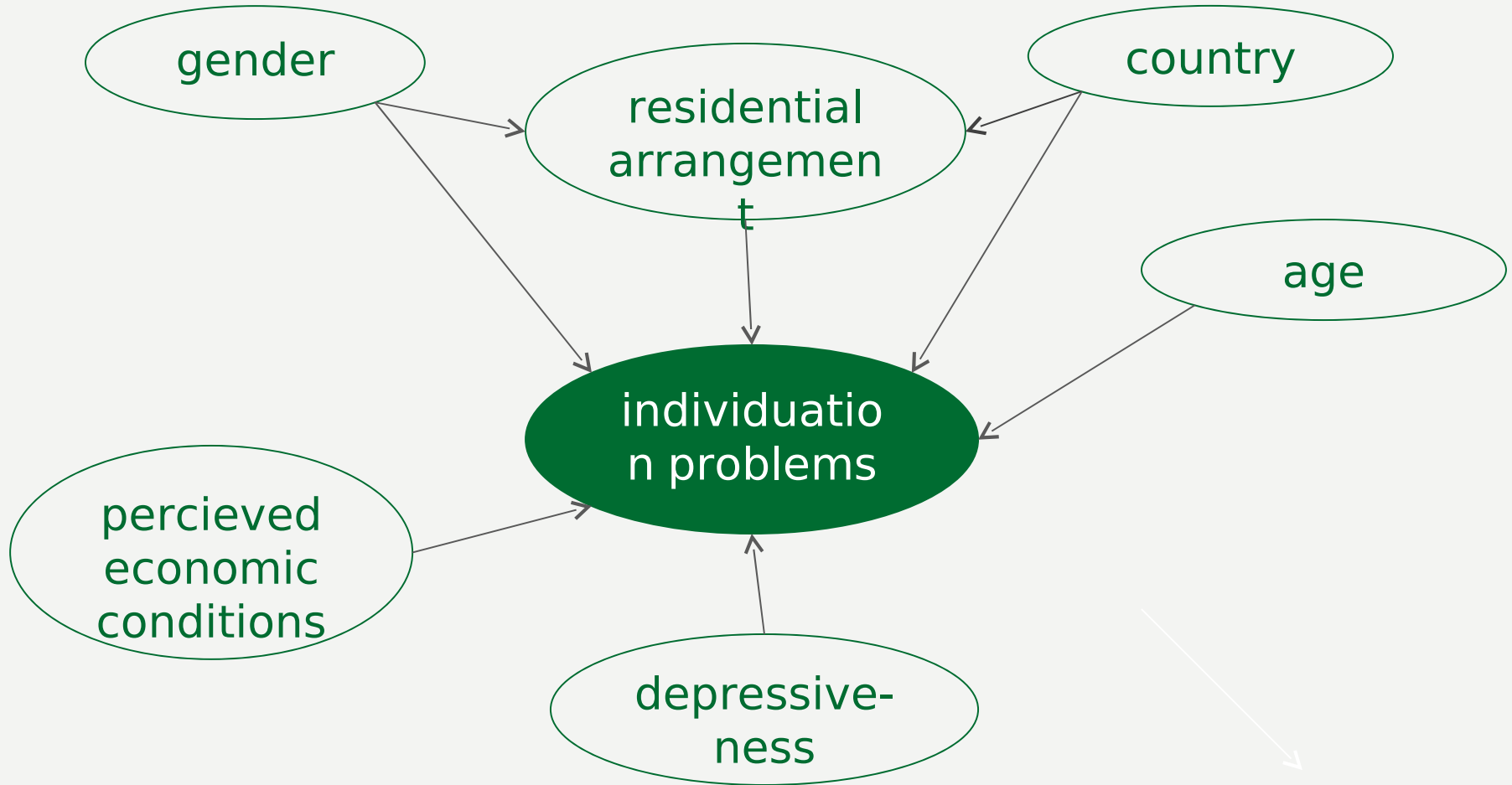
Fakultät für Psychologie und Pädagogik	Centro Studi e Ricerche sulla Famiglia	Institute of Psychology	Grup de Recerca de Parella i Família
Ludwig- Maximilians - University Munich	Universit� Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Milan	G�teborg University	Universita Ramon Llull Barcelona
Germany	Italy	Sweden	Spain

The MTA -in three cities





- 1. How does the residential arrangements of young adults in Milan, Munich, and Gothenburg differ?**
- 2. Do individuation problems differ by country and/or residential arrangement?**
- 3. Does perceived economic insecurity trigger individuation problems?**
- 4. Does depressiveness contribute to individuation problems?**
- 5. Does the link between depressiveness and individuation problems differ by country?**





	Milan	Munich	Gothenburg
N (all=1365)	572	555	238
Age Ø	25.0	24.5	24.2
♀	55.6%	58.6%	58.2%
Student or academic degree	52.1% N=298	79.5% N=441	97.1% N=231
Lives with parents	81.3%	28.8%	13.4%



	Milan	Munich	Gothenburg
N (all=1365)	572	555	238
Age Ø	25.0	24.5	24.2
♀	55.6%	58.6%	58.2%
Student or academic degree	52.1% N=298	79.5% N=441	97.1% N=231
Lives with parents	81.3%	28.8%	13.4%



Individuationproblems ^{META} (Walper)

- 14 identical Items for mothers and fathers –
- 5 Items **Ambivalence**
- 3 Items **Fear of Love Withdrawal**
- 6 Items **Engulfment Anxiety**
- Cronbach's Alpha = .82

Depressiveness (Radloff)

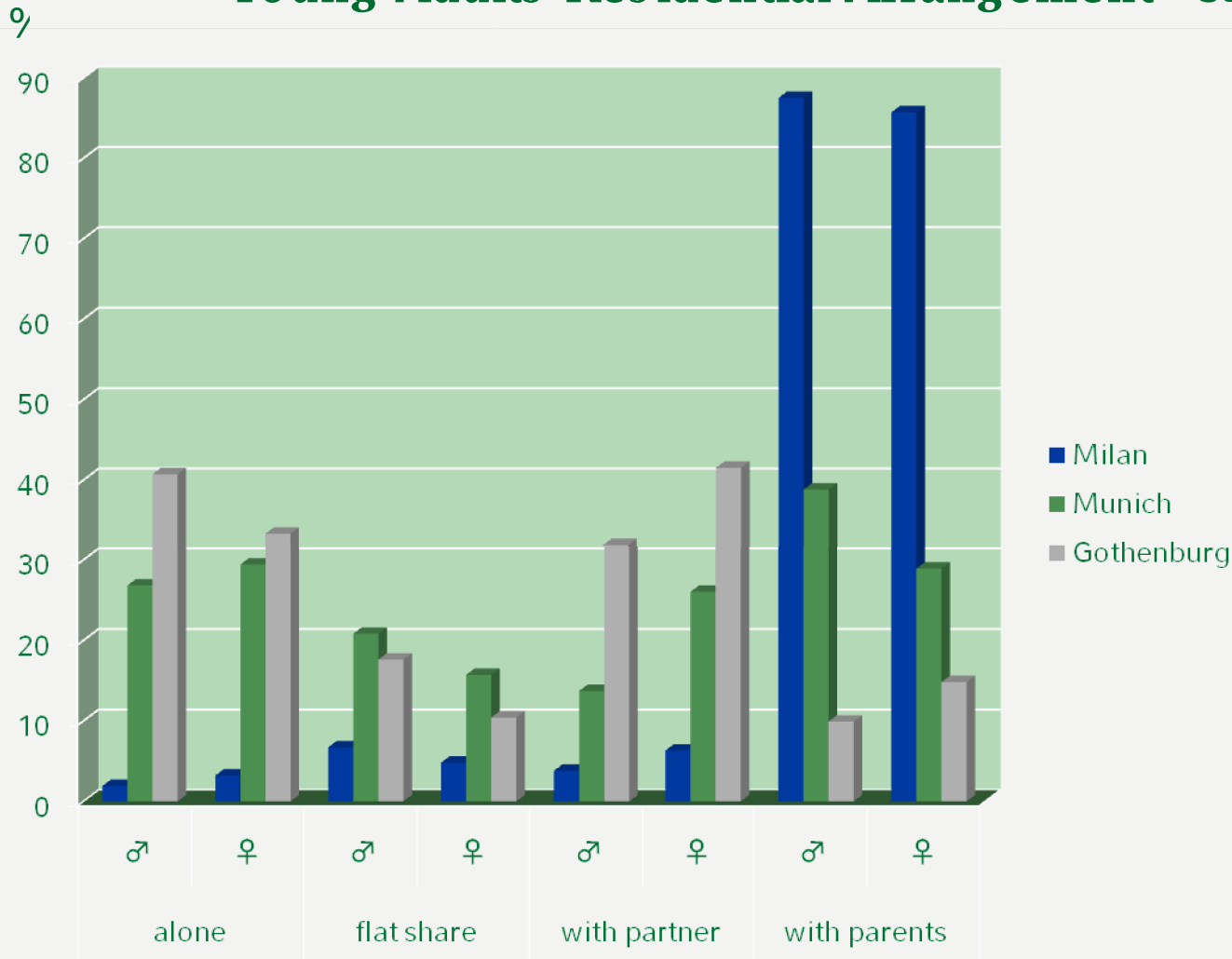
- 8 Items, e.g. "During the last week, I felt depressed",
- Cronbach's Alpha = .81

Residential Arrangement

- „Which person lives together with you in one household?“
- mother, father, siblings, stepfather/partner of mother, stepmother/ partner of father, grandparents, friends/flatmates, partner, children, alone, others



Young Adults 'Residential Arrangement' Student Sample N = 970



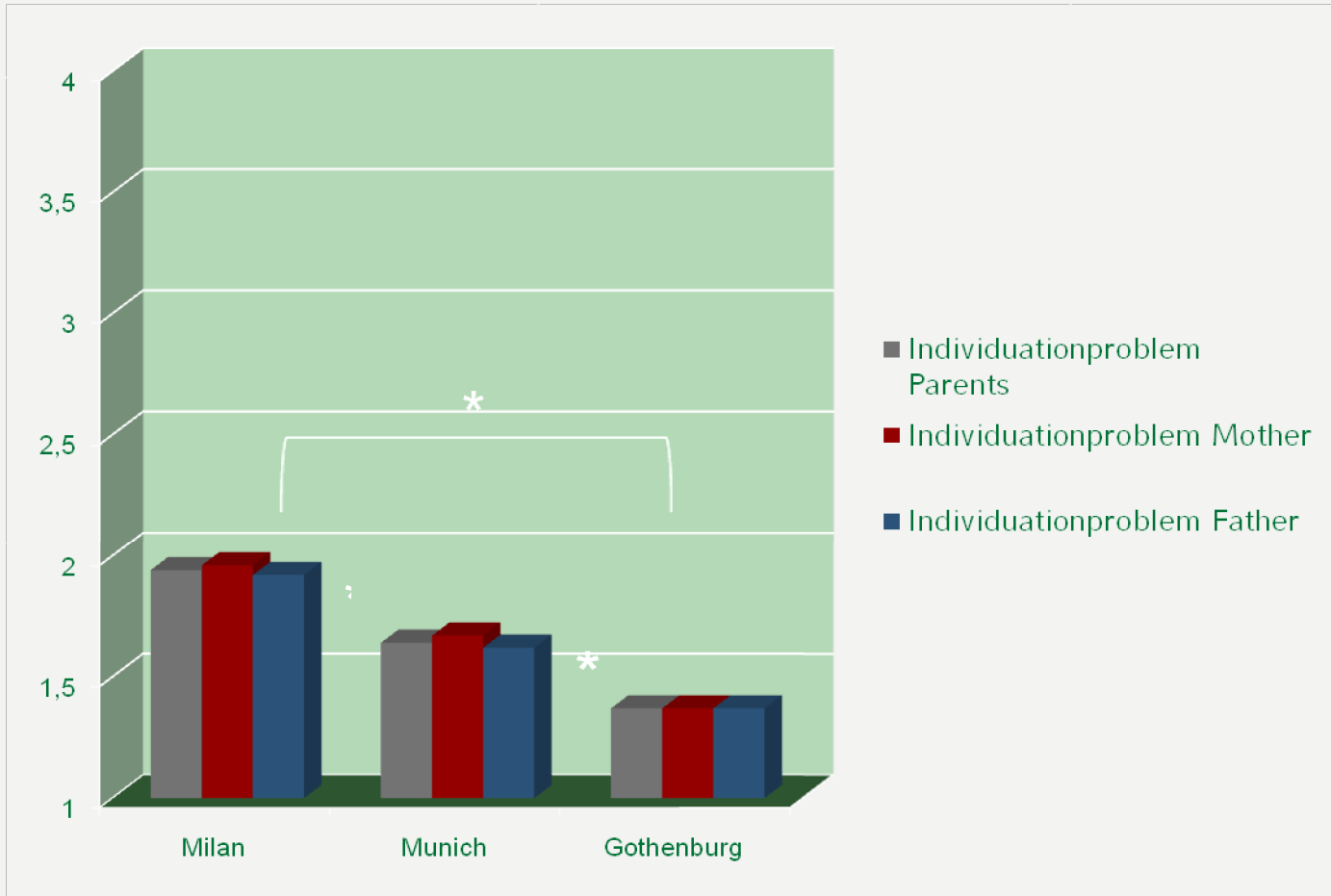
Italian students are more likely to live with parents

Swedish students tend to live alone or with partner

$p < .05$



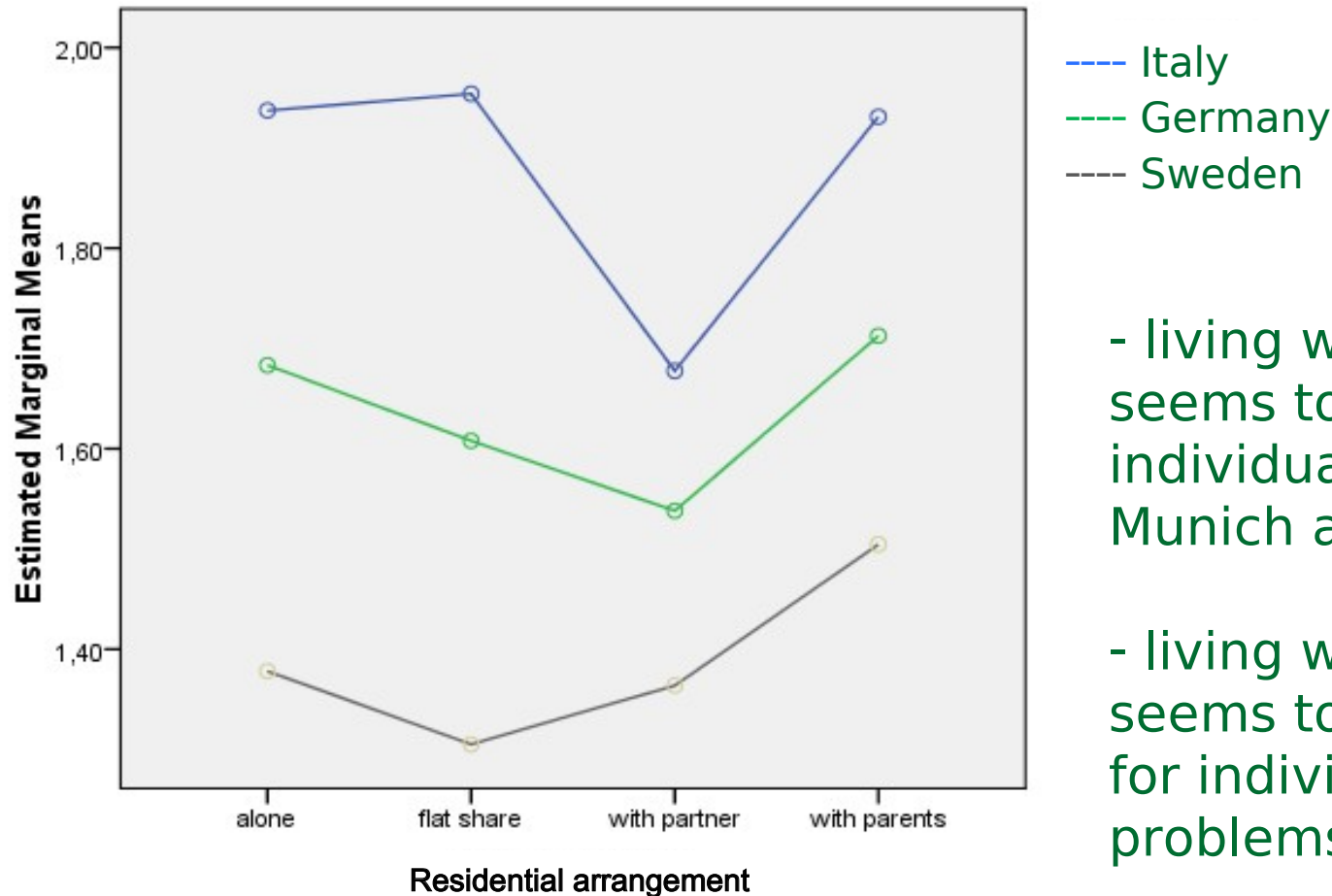
Individuation Problems by Country



Student Sample N = 970



Individuation Problems by Residential Arrangement and Country



- living with parents seems to force individuation problems in Munich and Gothenburg

- living with partner seems to make resilient for individuation problems

-No interaction effect

Student Sample N = 970

Predictors of Individuation Problems

Predictors	1. Beta	2. Beta
Italy	.316**	.250**
Sweden	-.261**	-.230**
Gender	-.040	-.032
Age	-.089*	-.049
Lives alone		.008
Shares flat		-.046
Lives with partner		-.098+
Lives with parents		.087
R²	.231	.248



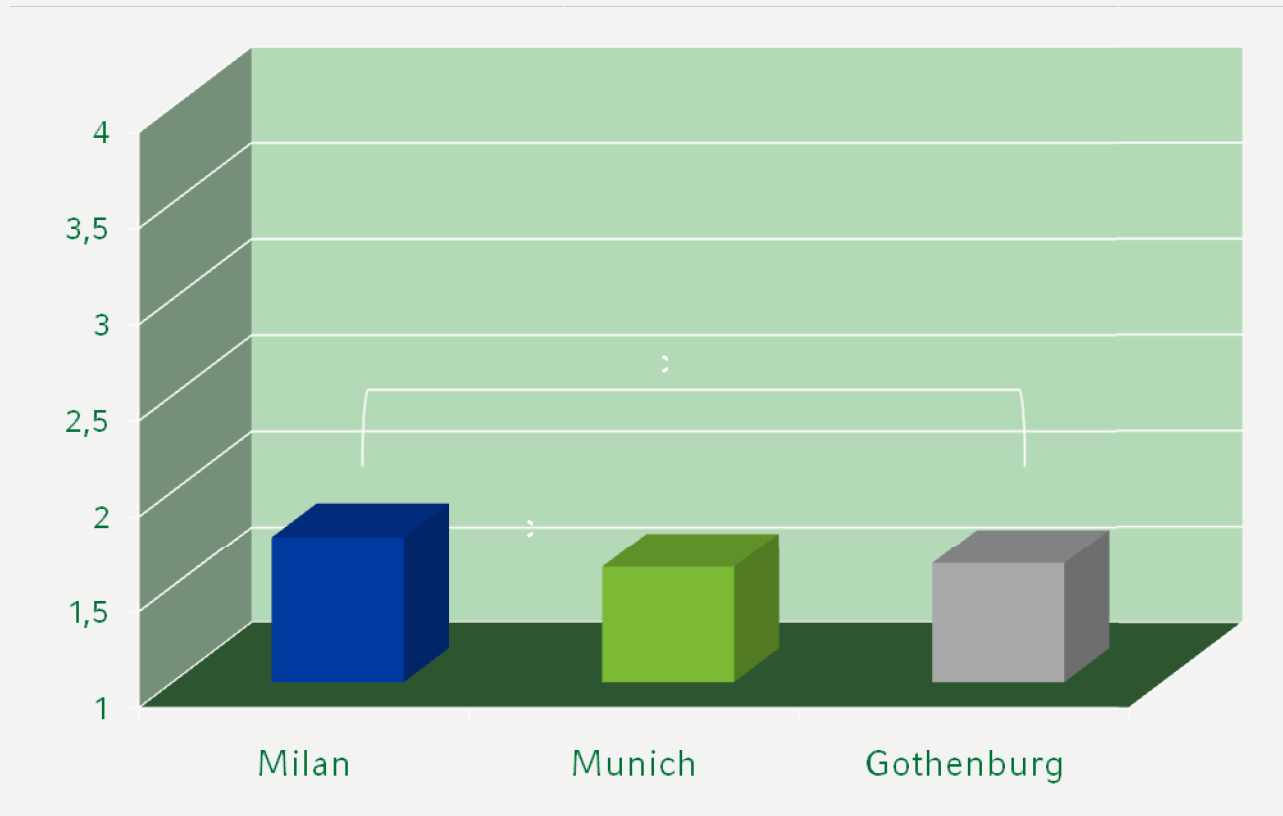
Effects of country cannot be explained by differences in residential arrangement



Predictors	1.	2.	3.	4.
Italy	.316**	.250**	.185**	.170**
Sweden	-.261**	-.230**	-.216**	-.225**
Gender	-.040	-.032	-.047	-.066*
Age	-.089*	-.049	-.063*	-.050+
Lives alone		.008	.011	-.012
Shares flat		-.046	-.041	-.056
Lives with partner		-.098+	-.091	-.081
Lives with parents		.087	.096	.092
Economic insecurity			.131**	.090*
Depressiveness				.228**
R²	.231	.248	.264	.312



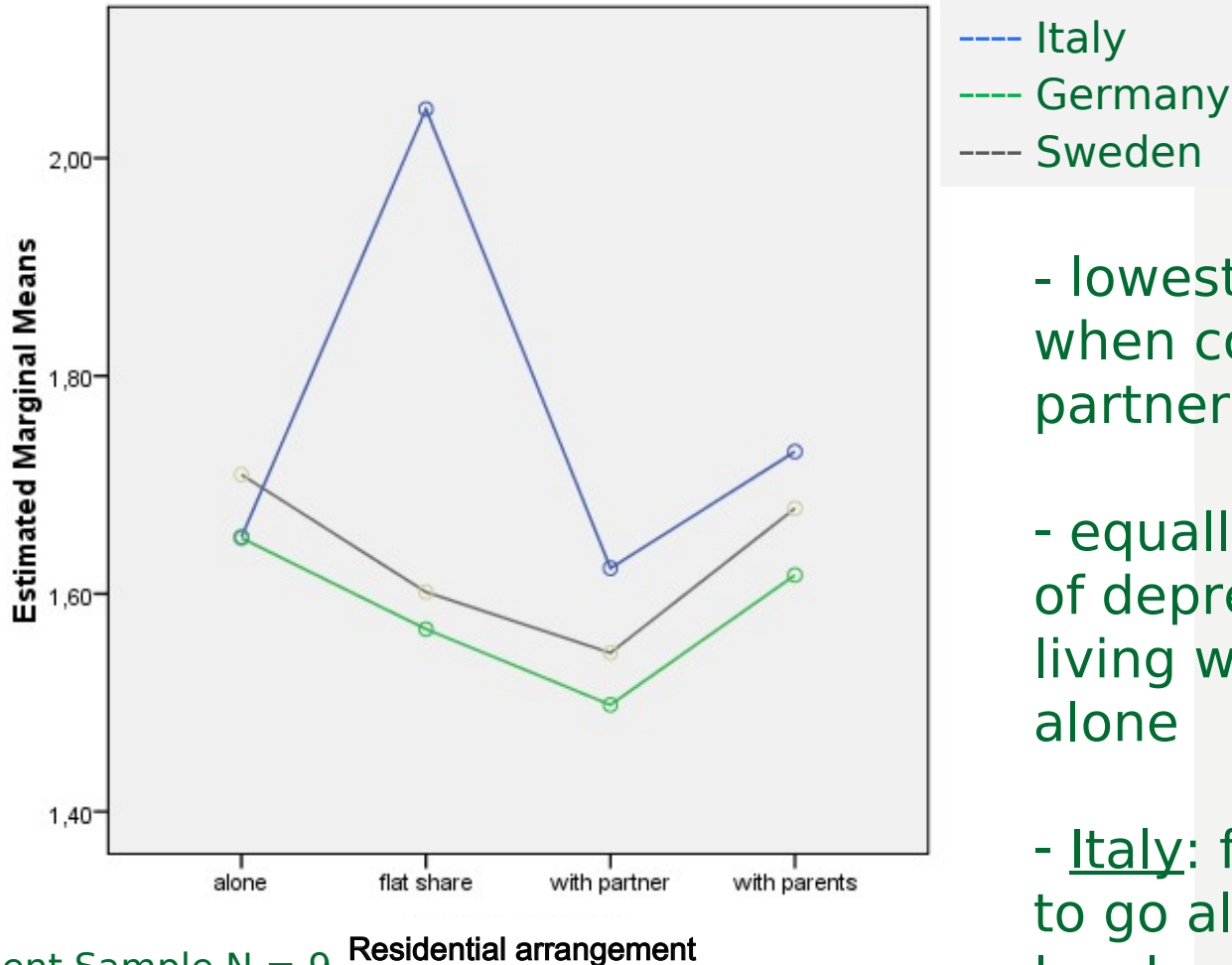
Depressiveness by Country



Student Sample N = 970



Depressiveness by Residential Arrangement and Country



- lowest depressiveness when coresiding with partner

- equally elevated levels of depressiveness when living with parents or alone

- Italy: flat sharing seems to go along with elevated levels of depressiveness

Student Sample N = 9.000 Residential arrangement



Intercorrelation of Individuation Problems and Depressiveness by Country

		Depressiveness
Individuation problems	Milan	.205*
	Munich	.281**
	Gothenburg	.409**

* }

→ **individuation problems are a less relevant risk factor for mental health in Italy**



Are there differences ...

➤ regarding the residential arrangement of young adults?

- ✓ in Milan young adults mainly live with their parents - “Famiglia lunga” (Scabini & Donati, 1988)

➤ regarding Individuation problems by countries and residential arrangement?

- ✓ co-residing with parents is not a distinct risk factor for individuation problems
- ✓ individuation problems are highest in Milan, but not due to residential arrangement
- ✓ different kind of individuation in the “famiglia lunga”? (Guglhoer-Rudan et al., 2007)



Are individuation problems predicted by...

➤ **economic insecurity**

- ✓ seems to predict individuation problems (Conger et al. ,1990; Frese, 1987)

➤ **Depressiveness**

- ✓ Best predictor, individuation problems are linked to mental health and well-being

Is there a relation between depressiveness, individuation problems and country

- ✓ individuation problems are a lower risk factor for mental health in Italy
- ✓ in Swedish sample the correlation between depressiveness and



THANK YOU

Contact:

c.thoennissen@lmu.de

[e](http://www.yagiss.de)

www.yagiss.de