

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Open Access



Italian grandparenthood within the European context: an introduction

Karen F. Glaser¹, Marco Albertini², Bruno Arpino³ and Cecilia Tomassini^{4*} 

*Correspondence:
cecilia.tomassini@unimol.it

¹ Institute of Gerontology, King's College London, London, UK

² University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy

³ University of Florence, Florence, Italy

⁴ University of Molise, Campobasso, Italy

Abstract

This thematic collection seeks to reflect and push forward the current state of the art in the study of grandparenthood and grandparenting in Italy in a comparative European perspective. Starting from the demography of grandparenthood, inter-generational transfers, contacts and living proximity between grandparents, parents and children and the characteristics of such exchanges are analysed. Furthermore, the consequences of grandparenting and especially of grandchild care provision in terms of fertility behaviour and work participation and well-being are investigated. The research articles aim to shed light on the complexity of factors which shape the effects of grandparents' availability and the behaviour and well-being of each of the three generations involved.

Introduction

Research on grandparents and grandparenthood is flourishing in most ageing societies around the globe. Grandparents play an important role in family life as providers of financial, emotional, and practical support given population ageing and changing generational configurations from a pyramid-shape towards a 'beanpole' family type (Hank et al., 2018; Herlofson & Hagestad, 2012). This change is caused in part by rising life expectancy; it is now common for a child to grow up with living grandparents and even great grandparents (Murphy, 2011), bringing new opportunities and challenges for inter-generational family relations (Leopold & Skopek, 2015b; Margolis, 2016). Alongside demographic trends come socio-economic change: more mothers in paid work, greater labour market instability, higher rates of divorce and relationship breakdown, and cuts to public services (including formal childcare) may also lead to an increasing role for grandparents in family life (Aassve et al., 2012a; Di Gessa et al., 2016a; Herlofson & Hagestad, 2012). Grandparents thus become vital both to the care of grandchildren from infancy to adolescence, but also as sources of social and economic support as their children reconcile work and family related responsibilities and deal with the financial difficulties associated with precarious and/or low paid jobs (Albertini, 2016). At the same time, however, grandparents' involvement in the extended family is being challenged by increasing pressures to postpone retirement.

In this context, the Italian case deserves particular attention due to its high prevalence of intensive grandparent care, and it is therefore the focus of this thematic issue. In many Southern European countries like Italy, the norm is either that mothers are at home¹ and thus excluded from the paid labour market, or mothers work full-time and are reliant on grandparents' (particularly grandmothers') support (Bordone et al., 2016; Price et al., 2020). Such high levels of intergenerational support are facilitated by another feature of Italian (and Southern European) societies: high levels of residential proximity between grandparents, parents, and their young grandchildren (Tomassini et al., 2003). The potential availability of grandparents has far-reaching consequences in the Italian context, also affecting couple's fertility behaviour (Aassve et al., 2012a). Nevertheless, even in Italy, where divorce rates are comparatively low and workers tend to retire early compared to other high-income countries, evidence suggests that rises in divorce and recent increases to minimum retirement age are challenging grandparents' ability to fulfil their traditional role (Zamberletti et al., 2018). The Italian case is also of interest given the significant heterogeneity of intergenerational relations across Italian regions. For instance, the prevalence of multigenerational households, intergenerational contacts and grandchild care (respectively) is significantly higher in southern regions in comparison to northern (Zamberletti et al., 2018); regional contextual factors (e.g., formal childcare, women's labour force participation rates) may act to moderate the grandparental role. Thus, both the importance and the considerable heterogeneity of Italian grandparenthood and grandparents, as well as the changing circumstances in which they are situated, makes Italy a useful case study from which to examine wider variations and trends in grandparenthood and their implications and makes this thematic series on "Italian grandparenthood within the European context" an important contribution to the scientific literature on the topic.

Demography of grandparenthood

The extent to which grandparents are involved in multigenerational family relations depends on several demographic factors, particularly the timing of fertility and mortality. However, evidence on the timing of the transition to grandparenthood, particularly in Europe, remains scarce. This is because few studies collect information on the year of birth of the oldest grandchild (Hank et al., 2018). Leopold and Skopek (2015a, 2015b), comparing data from Europe and North America, showed that the length of an individual's life as a grandparent varied considerably across countries and was closely associated with cross-national differences in the timing of childbearing (Leopold & Skopek, 2015b). Increases in the median age of becoming a grandparent were found in a US study using a microsimulation approach (Margolis & Verdery, 2019) as well as in a study using Canadian survey data (Margolis, 2016). Such findings may suggest that the number of years grandparents spend living with grandchildren is decreasing, despite continuous improvements in survival at older ages (Margolis, 2016). But delays in the transition to grandparenthood due to delayed childbearing may be offset by increases in the length of healthy grandparenthood (Margolis & Wright, 2017).

¹ According to Eurostat data, women's employment rate in 2021 was 53.2 in Italy, vs. 67.7 in the EU27 area.

Using Italy as a case study, Di Gessa et al. (2020) explored postponement in the transition to grandparenthood in more detail, focusing on the role of fertility decline. In line with Leopold and Skopek's (2015a, 2015b) results for East and West Germany, they found an increase in the median age of attaining grandparenthood in Italy (by about 5 years for those born in the 1940s in comparison to those born in the 1920s), particularly among those with smaller families and with later born children (Di Gessa et al., 2020; Leopold & Skopek, 2015a). Analysing change in Italy over the last two decades in this thematic issue, Cisotto and colleagues (2022) also show continued increases in grandparenthood to older ages. Yet, contrary to earlier expectations, the authors find that the combination of delays in the timing of grandparenthood and increases in life expectancy have led to stability rather than decline in co-survival between grandparents and grandchildren (Cisotto et al., 2022). Rising age at grandparenthood of course has important implications for grandchild care, due to the association between age and labour force participation, economic resources, and health status.

Co-residence, childcare, frequency of contact

Although the grandparental role may be enacted in different ways (Silverstein & Marengo, 2001), large-scale studies have largely focused on selected transfers: co-residence between grandparents and grandchildren, grandparents as providers of informal childcare to families and, to a lower extent, intergenerational face-to-face contacts mediating emotional and social support (Pasqualini et al., 2021). However, as noted in this thematic issue, we know little about changes over time in these relationships. Some scholars and a number of commentators in the public debate have hypothesised that industrialisation and urbanisation would lead to a decline in intergenerational exchanges (Popenoe, 1993), but recent research suggests that levels of solidarity between family members across generations remain overall high and stable (Steinbach et al., 2020).

The little evidence that exists on changes in grandparent–grandchild exchanges over time focuses on co-residence. Moreover, most evidence to date on grandparental–grandchild co-residence comes largely from the United States (US), a country that has experienced significant increases in the prevalence of multigenerational and grandparent households since the 1970s (Dunifon et al., 2014; Pew Research Center, 2010, 2013, 2014). This research shows that US grandparents living in households with their grandchildren are more likely to be socio-economically disadvantaged compared to other grandparents (Dunifon et al., 2014; Fuller-Thomson & Minkler, 2001; Fuller-Thomson et al., 1997; Minkler & Fuller-Thomson, 2005; Mutchler & Baker, 2004). In Europe, cuts to public services in response to the international financial crisis have also raised concerns that it is those with the fewest resources who are increasingly likely to rely on grandparental support (Glaser et al., 2018); in a recent study of six European countries and the United States from the 1980s to the 2010s, the authors found that the proportion of three-generation households increased only in the United States and in Romania (but not in Greece, Portugal or Spain) (Glaser et al., 2018). However, in all the countries studied, co-resident grandparent households were characterised by socio-economic disadvantage. In this thematic issue, Pasqualini et al. (2021) have shown that despite socio-demographic changes, co-residence between grandparents and grandchildren remained broadly stable between 1998 and 2016 in Italy. Moreover, as in Glaser et al.

(2018), Pasqualini and colleagues (2021) found that grandparents with lower educational and income levels were more likely to co-reside with grandchildren, with this association persisting across the period considered.

A well-established body of work shows that around the globe grandparents are significant providers of grandchild care (Grundy et al., 2012; Knodel & Nguyen, 2014; Ko & Hank, 2013; Ku et al., 2013); however, cross-national and intra-national comparisons are complicated by different definitions (Hank et al., 2018) as well as different measurement scales of frequency (from regular to occasional or only for special occasions) and intensity (from a few hours per year to several times per day) (Glaser, 2013; Glaser et al., 2013; Herlofson & Hagestad, 2012). In Europe, in 2004/2005, 58% of grandmothers and 49% of grandfathers looked after at least one grandchild under the age of 16 (Hank & Buber, 2009), with 12% providing care almost daily or at least 15 h a week (Di Gessa et al., 2016a).

However, as discussed by Pasqualini et al. (2021), few studies examine changes in grandparental care over time. Guerts et al. (2015) using data from the Longitudinal Study of Amsterdam found an increase in grandparental childcare from 23% in 1992 to 41% in 2006, a rise they attribute to greater maternal labour force participation (Geurts et al., 2015). As for grandparent-grandchild co-residence, Pasqualini et al. (2021) has shown broad stability from 1998 to 2016 in grandparent–grandchild transfers in Italy in both childcare and frequency of contact, with few changes in the associations between demographic and socio-economic characteristics and grandparent–grandchild transfers despite significant changes in the characteristics of Italian grandparents (such as rising ages and levels of divorce) (Pasqualini et al., 2021).

Another important issue likely to be modifying intergenerational contact is greater availability and use of digital communication technologies (Danielsbacka et al., 2022). Arpino et al. (2022) in this thematic issue compared digital contact between grandparents and grandchildren with traditional forms of contact (i.e. face-to-face and by telephone) (Arpino et al., 2022). Their findings showed how grandparents belonging to younger cohorts, those with higher education, those living in urban areas and those in better health were more likely to maintain digital contact with their grandchildren. Mainly, digital contact tends to compensate for a lack of (frequent) face-to-face contact, and to combine with telephone contact to overcome the problem of geographical distance between generations.

Adult children's labour force participation and division of unpaid housework

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of grandparent availability on a wide range of issues, including younger generations' labour force participation and fertility behaviour. For instance, research shows that the provision of regular grandchild care may facilitate labour force participation among the middle generation (and daughters/mothers in particular) (Aassve et al., 2012a; Arpino et al., 2014) particularly where little formal childcare is available (Bordone et al., 2016; Di Gessa et al., 2016a). Help to parents (to give them a break, help them go to work, or go out) is the most often reported reason for grandchild care provision (Di Gessa et al., 2020), with more frequent grandchild care being reported in families where parents are in low-paid or insecure jobs or had fewer economic resources (Airey et al., 2020; Arpino et al., 2014).

At the same time, it is argued that grandparental childcare is associated with entry into parenthood among the middle generation (Aassve et al., 2012b; Pink, 2018; Rutigliano, 2020; Thomese & Liefbroer, 2013), with evidence suggesting that grandparents even adapt their retirement preferences (Hochman & Lewin-Epstein, 2013) as well as its timing (Lumsdaine & Vermeer, 2015; Van Bavel & De Winter, 2013) to fit in with their adult children's fertility behaviour. However, as noted by Rutigliano and Lozano (2022) in this thematic issue, much less is known about the association between grandparental support and fertility intentions rather than behaviour, and the findings on this latter issue are mixed (Rutigliano & Lozano, 2022). On the one hand, recent work in Germany does not show an association between older parents' transfers to adult children and fertility intentions regarding a first or second child (Tanskanen & Danielsbacka, 2021). On the other hand, a positive association between grandparental care and fertility intentions is apparent in Norway and France (Tanskanen & Rotkirch, 2014). Rutigliano and Lozano (2022) find that the receipt of grandparental support has a positive and significant impact on women's but not men's fertility intentions in Spain, a Southern European country like Italy. This is especially the case among more highly educated Spanish women, that is those who are more likely to experience greater work–family conflict and who, in the context of societies with little formal childcare provision, are more likely to rely on the extended family to support their full-time labour market participation.

In this thematic issue Albertini and Tosi (2022) explore another aspect of adult children's lives in which grandparent availability may play a role: the (gendered) division of unpaid housework (Albertini & Tosi, 2022). In several European societies, it has been observed that in recent years—perhaps because of changing social roles and increased women's participation in paid labour (Grunow & Evertsson, 2019)—men's participation in the provision of childcare has increased. This is more so among highly educated couples. At the same time, no matching trend has been observed in the gendered division of household chores, and particularly of routine tasks, which remain an important dimension of gender inequality within families and society (Bianchi et al., 2012; Carrero & Todesco, 2018). Albertini and Tosi (2022) ask if, as with formal childcare services, the availability of grandparents and the support they provide is associated with a more gender-equal division of housework among Italian heterosexual couples with minor children. Their findings show no clear association between face-to-face contacts between grandparents and adult children and the symmetry of the division of household labour. At the same time, however, they show that three-generation households with minor grandchildren are characterised by a more gender-equal division of household tasks than that observed in two-generation households with minor children. In particular, the positive role of living with grandparents is higher than that of hiring a babysitter and equivalent to that of hiring a professional housekeeper.

Grandparent labour force participation, health, and well-being

Becoming a grandparent and looking after grandchildren may also influence grandparents' labour market participation, health, and well-being (Arpino et al., 2014; Bordone & Arpino, 2022; Chen & Liu, 2012; Di Gessa et al., 2016a, 2016c; Tsai et al., 2013). A growing body of literature shows an association between becoming a grandparent/transitioning to grandparenthood and leaving work and/or working fewer

hours (Backhaus & Barslund, 2021; Lumsdaine & Vermeer, 2015; Rupert & Zanella, 2018; Van Bavel & De Winter, 2013; Zanasi et al., 2020). A key gap in the literature is the question of how life-course circumstances and events influence labour market participation and grandparental childcare in later life. Zanasi and colleagues (2020) found that in England first-time grandmothers with continuous work careers or short employment interruptions—i.e. those with lower opportunity costs in withdrawing from paid work—were more likely to leave employment (Zanasi et al., 2020). In this thematic issue, Zanasi and colleagues (2022) also show that among Italian grandmothers, those who have ever worked are more likely to provide grandchild care in comparison to those with no labour market attachment, especially when adult children are in paid employment (Zanasi et al., 2022). This is in direct contrast to those who would argue that older mothers who prioritise family obligations over paid work roles are more likely to assume family responsibilities in later life. In fact, older mothers who have been in paid employment throughout their lives are more likely to provide the necessary support to permit their adult children (predominately daughters) to engage in paid work thus maintaining a critical link to the labour market (Zanasi et al., 2022). One could hypothesise, therefore, that grandmothers' desire to transmit the role of "working mother" and the empathy towards the common condition of mother and daughter largely offsets other potential social and psychological mechanisms.

The link between grandparental relations and health has been extensively investigated across different societal contexts (ranging from Chile to the U.S., Europe, and China) (Arpino & Bordone, 2014; Chen & Liu, 2012; Di Gessa et al., 2016b, 2016c; Grundy et al., 2012; Tsai et al., 2013). Evidence on the impact of being a grandparent and grandparental care on health and well-being continues to be mixed. On the one hand, detrimental health effects are found particularly among grandparents who co-reside with grandchildren, whereas less intensive grandchild care seems to have either beneficial or no major widespread health effects after socio-economic and demographic characteristics along with prior health status are taken into account. The health effects of grandchild care seem to depend on several factors including the frequency and nature of interactions, the regional/cultural context, the health measures considered, and the type of analytical approaches used. For example, recent work examining the rejuvenating effect of grandchild care (how old one feels is strongly associated with indicators of well-being) has found that grandchild care did not make grandparents feel any younger than their actual age (Bordone & Arpino, 2022). The authors were able to investigate this issue using longitudinal panel data methods and attributed this non-finding to selection effects: that is, grandparents in good health and feeling young may be more likely to look after grandchildren. Yang et al. (2022) in this thematic issue further advances our understanding of the link between grandparental childcare and well-being through their investigation of how this relationship may be moderated by contextual effects—in this case, a country's GDP (gross domestic product). The findings suggest that grandparents providing more intensive grandchild care report fewer depressive symptoms to a greater extent in lower income European countries in comparison to their counterparts in higher income European countries (Yang et al., 2022). Such results suggest an important role for contextual factors in modifying the beneficial impact of grandchild care on mental health.

Conclusion

The contributions to this thematic issue demonstrate the importance of (a) gathering greater detail on specific societal contexts to better understand multigenerational family functioning and the changing social role of grandparents; (b) considering changes over time in grandparental characteristics and transfers; and (c) the complexity of factors which shape the effects of grandparents' availability and the behaviour and well-being of each of the three generations involved. Naturally, the scope to provide comprehensive answers to any of these questions is limited, even in this thematic issue that the Editors of *Genus* have generously allocated. We sincerely hope that the articles collected here will stimulate further research (in Italy and in Europe as well as beyond), which will eventually allow us to get closer to filling at least some of the critical gaps in our knowledge about grandparents—and to develop new questions for future research.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the participants of the network Grandparenting in Europe and the Free University of Bozen for the support of the network.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the paper. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

No funding has to be acknowledged.

Availability of data and materials

None.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Accepted.

Consent for publication

Accepted.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Received: 9 September 2022 Accepted: 21 September 2022

Published online: 12 October 2022

References

- Aassve, A., Arpino, B., & Goisis, A. (2012a). Grandparenting and mothers' labour force participation: A comparative analysis using the generations and gender survey. *Demographic Research*, 27, 53–84.
- Aassve, A., Meroni, E., & Pronzato, C. (2012b). Grandparenting and childbearing in the extended family. *European Journal of Population/revue Européenne De Démographie*, 28(4), 499–518.
- Airey, L., Lain, D., Jandrić, J., et al. (2020). A selfish generation? 'Baby boomers', values, and the provision of childcare for grandchildren. *The Sociological Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038026120916104>
- Albertini, M. (2016). Ageing and family solidarity in Europe: patterns and driving factors of intergenerational support. Poverty and Equity Global Practice Working Paper Series, no. 072. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.
- Albertini, M., & Tosi, M. (2022). Grandparents, family solidarity and the division of housework: Evidence from the Italian case. *Genus*, 78(1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-022-00168-4>
- Arpino, B., & Bordone, V. (2014). Does grandparenting pay off? The effect of child care on grandparents' cognitive functioning. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 76(2), 337–351.
- Arpino, B., Meli, E., Pasqualini, M., et al. (2022). Determinants of grandparent–grandchild digital contact in Italy. *Genus*, 78(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-022-00167-5>
- Arpino, B., Pronzato, C. D., & Tavares, L. P. (2014). The effect of grandparental support on mothers' labour market participation: An instrumental variable approach. *European Journal of Population*, 30(4), 369–390.
- Backhaus, A., & Barslund, M. (2021). The effect of grandchildren on grandparental labor supply: evidence from Europe. *European Economic Review*, 137, 103817.
- Bianchi, S. M., Sayer, L. C., Milkie, M. A., et al. (2012). Housework: Who did, does or will do it, and how much does it matter? *Social Forces*, 91(1), 55–63.
- Bordone, V., & Arpino, B. (2022). Is there a rejuvenating effect of (grand) childcare? A longitudinal study on German data. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 77(2), 446–455.

- Bordone, V., Arpino, B., & Aassve, A. (2016). Patterns of grandparental child care across Europe: The role of the policy context and working mothers' need. *Ageing and Society*, 37(4), 845–873.
- Carriero, R., & Todesco, L. (2018). Housework division and gender ideology: When do attitudes really matter? *Demographic Research*, 39, 1039–1064.
- Chen, F., & Liu, G. (2012). The health implications of grandparents caring for grandchildren in China. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 67B(1), 99–112.
- Cisotto, E., Meli, E., & Cavrini, G. (2022). Grandparents in Italy: Trends and changes in the demography of grandparenthood from 1998 to 2016. *Genus*, 78(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-022-00153-x>
- Danielsbacka, M., Křenková, L., & Tanskanen, A. O. (2022). Grandparenting, health, and well-being: A systematic literature review. *European Journal of Ageing*, 19, 341–368.
- Di Gessa, G., Bordone, V., & Arpino, B. (2020). The role of fertility in the demography of grandparenthood: Evidence from Italy. *Journal of Population Ageing*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12062-020-09310-6>
- Di Gessa, G., Glaser, K., Price, D., et al. (2016a). What drives national differences in intensive grandparental childcare in Europe? *Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 71(1), 141–153.
- Di Gessa, G., Glaser, K., & Tinker, A. (2016b). The health impact of intensive and nonintensive grandchild care in Europe: New evidence From SHARE. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 71(5), 867–879.
- Di Gessa, G., Glaser, K., & Tinker, A. (2016c). The impact of caring for grandchildren on the health of grandparents in Europe: A lifecourse approach. *Social Science & Medicine*, 152, 166–175.
- Dunifon, R. E., Ziol-Guest, K. M., & Kopko, K. (2014). Grandparent coresidence and family well-being: Implications for research and policy. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 654(1), 110–126.
- Fuller-Thomson, E., & Minkler, M. (2001). American grandparents providing extensive child care to their grandchildren: Prevalence and profile. *The Gerontologist*, 41(2), 201–209.
- Fuller-Thomson, E., Minkler, M., & Driver, D. (1997). A profile of grandparents raising grandchildren in the United States. *The Gerontologist*, 37(3), 406–411.
- Geurts, T., Van Tilburg, T., Poortman, A.-R., et al. (2015). Child care by grandparents: Changes between 1992 and 2006. *Ageing & Society*, 35(6), 1318–1334.
- Glaser K (2013) Grandparenting in Europe Report. *Grandparenting in Europe: Advisory Group Meeting*. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, London. 14 March.
- Glaser, K., di Gessa, G., Ribe, E., et al. (2013). *Grandparenting in Europe*. Grandparents Plus.
- Glaser, K., Stuchbury, R., Price, D., et al. (2018). Trends in the prevalence of grandparents living with grandchild (ren) in selected European countries and the United States. *European Journal of Ageing*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-018-0474-3>
- Grundy, E., Albala, C., Allen, E., et al. (2012). Grandparenting and psychosocial health among older Chileans: A longitudinal analysis. *Ageing & Mental Health*, 16(8), 1047–1057.
- Grunow, D., & Evertsson, M. (2019). *New parents in Europe*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Hank, K., & Buber, I. (2009). Grandparents caring for their grandchildren findings from the 2004 survey of health, ageing, and retirement in Europe. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30(1), 53–73.
- Hank, K., Cavrini, G., Di Gessa, G., et al. (2018). What do we know about grandparents? Insights from current quantitative data and identification of future data needs. *European Journal of Ageing*, 15(3), 225–235.
- Herlofson, K., & Hagestad, G. O. (2012). Chapter 1: Transformations in the role of grandparents across welfare states. In V. Timonen & S. Arber (Eds.), *Contemporary grandparenting*. Policy Press.
- Hochman, O., & Lewin-Epstein, N. (2013). Determinants of early retirement preferences in Europe: The role of grandparenthood. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 54(1), 29–47.
- Knodel, J., & Nguyen, M. D. (2014). Grandparents and grandchildren: Care and support in Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. *Ageing and Society*, 35(9), 1960–1988.
- Ko, P.-C., & Hank, K. (2013). Grandparents caring for grandchildren in China and Korea: Findings from CHARLS and KLoSA. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 69(4), 646–651.
- Ku, L.-J.E., Stearns, S. C., Van Houtven, C. H., et al. (2013). Impact of caring for grandchildren on the health of grandparents in Taiwan. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 68(6), 1009–1021.
- Leopold, T., & Skopek, J. (2015a). The delay of grandparenthood: A cohort comparison in East and West Germany. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77(2), 441–460.
- Leopold, T., & Skopek, J. (2015b). The demography of grandparenthood: An international profile. *Social Forces*, 94(2), 801–832.
- Lumsdaine, R. L., & Vermeer, S. J. (2015). Retirement timing of women and the role of care responsibilities for grandchildren. *Demography*, 52(2), 433–454.
- Margolis, R. (2016). The changing demography of grandparenthood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 78(3), 610–622.
- Margolis, R., & Verdery, A. M. (2019). A cohort perspective on the demography of grandparenthood: Past, present, and future changes in race and sex disparities in the United States. *Demography*, 56(4), 1495–1518.
- Margolis, R., & Wright, L. (2017). Healthy grandparenthood: How long is it, and how has it changed? *Demography*, 54(6), 2073–2099.
- Minkler, M., & Fuller-Thomson, E. (2005). African American grandparents raising grandchildren: A National Study using the Census 2000 American Community Survey. *Journals of Gerontology Series B-Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 60(2), S82–S92.
- Murphy, M. (2011). Long-term effects of the demographic transition on family and kinship networks. *Population and Development Review*, 37(supplement), 55–80.
- Mutchler, J. E., & Baker, L. A. (2004). A demographic examination of grandparent caregivers in the Census 2000 Supplementary Survey. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 23(4), 359–377.
- Pasqualini, M., Di Gessa, G., & Tomassini, C. (2021). A change is (not) gonna come: A 20-year overview of Italian grandparent–grandchild exchanges. *Genus*, 77(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-021-00142-6>

- Pew Research Center. (2010). *The return of the multi-generational family household*. Report no. Report Number|, Date. Place Published|: Institution|.
- Pew Research Center. (2013). *At grandmother's house we stay*. Report no. Report Number|, Date. Place Published|: Institution|.
- Pew Research Center. (2014). *In post-recession era, young adults drive continuing rise in multi-generational living*. Report no. Report Number|, Date. Place Published|: Institution|.
- Pink, S. (2018). Anticipated (Grand-)parental childcare support and the decision to become a parent. *European Journal of Population*, 34(5), 691–720.
- Popenoe, D. (1993). American family decline, 1960–1990: A review and appraisal. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 73, 527–542.
- Price, D., Ribe, E., Di Gessa, G., et al. (2020). Chapter 3. Grandparental childcare: A reconceptualisation of family policy regimes. In V. Timonen (Ed.), *Grandparenting practices around the world* (pp. 43–62). Policy Press.
- Rupert, P., & Zanella, G. (2018). Grandchildren and their grandparents' labor supply. *Journal of Public Economics*, 159, 89–103.
- Rutigliano, R. (2020). Counting on potential grandparents? Adult children's entry into parenthood across European countries. *Demography*, 57(4), 1393–1414.
- Rutigliano, R., & Lozano, M. (2022). Do I want more if you help me? The impact of grandparental involvement on men's and women's fertility intentions. *Genus*, 78(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-022-00161-x>
- Silverstein, M., & Marengo, A. (2001). How Americans enact the grandparent role across the family life course. *Journal of Family Issues*, 22(4), 493–522.
- Steinbach, A., Mahne, K., Klaus, D., & Hank, K. (2020). Stability and change in intergenerational family relations across two decades: Findings from the German ageing survey, 1996–2014. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 75(4), 899–906.
- Tanskanen, A. O., & Danielsbacka, M. (2021). Does parental investment shape adult children's fertility intentions? Findings from a German Family Panel. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 6, 135.
- Tanskanen, A. O., & Rotkirch, A. (2014). The impact of grandparental investment on mothers' fertility intentions in four European countries. *Demographic Research*, 31, 1–26.
- Thomese, F., & Liefbroer, A. C. (2013). Child care and child births: The role of grandparents in the Netherlands. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 75(2), 403–421.
- Tomassini, C., Wolf, D. A., & Rosina, A. (2003). Parental housing assistance and parent-child proximity in Italy. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(3), 700–715.
- Tsai, F.-J., Motamed, S., & Rougemont, A. (2013). The protective effect of taking care of grandchildren on elders' mental health? Associations between changing patterns of intergenerational exchanges and the reduction of elders' loneliness and depression between 1993 and 2007 in Taiwan. *BMC Public Health*, 13, 567.
- Van Bavel, J., & De Winter, T. (2013). Becoming a grandparent and early retirement in Europe. *European Sociological Review*, 29(6), 1295–1308.
- Yang, Y., Evandrou, M., & Vlachantoni, A. (2022). The impact of grandchild care provision on grandparents' depressive symptoms across Europe using multi-level analysis: Do the grandchild caring patterns and the country's economy matter? *Genus*, 78(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-022-00160-y>
- Zamberletti, J., Cavrini, G., & Tomassini, C. (2018). Grandparents providing childcare in Italy. *European Journal of Ageing*, 15(3), 265–275.
- Zanasi, F., Arpino, B., Pirani, E., et al. (2022). Work histories and provision of grandparental childcare among Italian older women. *Genus*, 78(1), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-022-00158-6>
- Zanasi, F., Sieben, I., & Uunk, W. (2020). Work history, economic resources, and women's labour market withdrawal after the birth of the first grandchild. *European Journal of Ageing*, 17(1), 109–118.

Publisher's Note

Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Submit your manuscript to a SpringerOpen[®] journal and benefit from:

- Convenient online submission
- Rigorous peer review
- Open access: articles freely available online
- High visibility within the field
- Retaining the copyright to your article

Submit your next manuscript at ► [springeropen.com](https://www.springeropen.com)
