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Doubling Up: A Gift or a Shame?
Intergenerational Households and Parental Depression
of Older Europeans

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Abstract

The Great Recession has brought along a rearrangement of living patterns both in the U.S. and in Europe. This study seeks to identify the consequences of a change in intergenerational coresidence on the depression level of the elderly. Using data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) and a difference-in-difference propensity score matching approach, we find robust evidence of a positive effect of coresidence on the mental health of the older generation in those European countries historically marked by a Catholic tradition. In contrast with previous literature, our program evaluation setup accounts for non-random selection bias and heterogeneous treatment effects. Though heterogeneous across Europe, our results highlight that, in a time marked by increasing demographic aging, intergenerational living arrangements can lead to significant improvements in the quality of life of older individuals.

Keywords: Europe; Doubling up; Mental health; Aging; DID; Matching; Wellbeing

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