

Non-kin ties as a source of support in Europe: On the role of context

1. Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties (Erich Fromm, 1900-1980).
2. Despite the fundamental contextual changes occurring in Europe, the family remains the most important source of help. Taking a second position, non-kin ties both complement and substitute kin support (This thesis).
3. The degree to which non-kin ties serve as a potential and actual source of support depends on the type of help that is needed. Non-kin reliance is more common for help with finding a job and emotional support than practical household help (This thesis).
4. When it comes to non-kin support in Europe, there seem to exist more nuanced country differences than the previously proposed north/west-south/east divide of the continent (This thesis).
5. Understanding country differences in non-kin support is best achieved through combining country and individual level explanations.
6. Understanding the role of context in shaping non-kin support requires the careful conceptualisation of both non-kin support and context (This thesis).
7. Circumstances promoting non-kin support include: lower country levels of familialistic norms, higher levels of individual generalised trust, and increasing geographic distance between parents and children (This thesis).
8. Everything is relative (Albert Einstein, 1879-1955). It is therefore essential to compare the right things.
9. Publications are the means not the goal of science.
10. The only way of having friends is to be one (Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882).
11. Life is a sequence of ups and downs. Neither last forever.